

Reflective Teaching Practices in ESL First-Year Composition Courses:  
Examining Teacher Beliefs and Implementation of Technology

by

Ebru Erdem

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Philosophy

Approved November 2014 by the  
Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Elly Van Gelderen, Chair  
Don Nilsen  
Mark James

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

December 2014

## ABSTRACT

This study investigates the relationships between ESL teachers' beliefs about writing instruction and their use of computer technology in the first-year composition classroom. Utilizing a sociocultural approach, the study analyzes the connections between ESL teachers' instructional beliefs and the technological practices that emerge as a result of these beliefs and decisions. Qualitative research was conducted, and data was collected through classroom observations, teacher interviews, and course materials. Data analysis reveals that regardless of teachers' differing beliefs about writing instruction, they use computer technology when it enhances their teaching and students' learning. It also reveals that factors such as teacher attitude toward technology and adequate training affect the extent to which they incorporate technology into class.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work was aided by the contributions of my committee members, Dr. Elly Van Gelderen, Dr. Don Nilsen, and Dr. Mark James. Thank you for your support. My sincere thanks also goes to the participant teachers who volunteered and made this study possible.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER		Page
1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
2	THEORETICAL GROUNDING AND BACKGROUND RESEARCH.....	9
	Sociocultural Framework.....	9
	Background Research on ESL Composition.....	26
	Background Research on CALL.....	55
3	METHODOLOGY.....	73
	Research Type.....	73
	Contexts and Participants.....	86
	Data Collection.....	89
	Researcher's Role.....	93
4	DATA ANALYSIS.....	96
	Research Context #1.....	96
	Research Context #2.....	113
	Research Context #3.....	131
5	CONCLUSION.....	153
	Summary of Analysis of Data.....	153
	Limitations.....	157
	Recommendations for Future Studies.....	158

	Page
REFERENCES.....	161
APPENDIX	
A     COURSE DESCRIPTION FOR ENG 108.....	169
B     COURSE DESCRIPTIONS FOR ENG 102/ENG 108.....	171
C     COURSE COMPETENCIES FOR ENG 107.....	175
D     COURSE COMPETENCIES FOR ENG 108.....	179
E     TEACHER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS.....	183
F     WPA OUTCOMES STATEMENTS FOR FIRST-YEAR COMPOSITION.....	185

## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

Due to the growing importance of technology in higher education, teachers are increasingly implementing computer-assisted learning in their courses. This trend also applies to the teachers of English as a second language (ESL) composition courses. ESL teachers continually negotiate their use of computer technology with their approach to teaching writing. Relatedly, what an ESL teacher assumes to be the purpose of a first-year college composition classroom in an ESL student's academic life shapes her approach to teaching writing and using classroom activities and assignments. The use of technology is no exception. Similar to any writing tool and strategy that a teacher may implement based on her beliefs about the place of academic writing in students' life and how the college writing classroom should serve that need, computer technology is another writing tool that plays an important role in students' life, thus it affects ESL teachers' decisions on how and to what extent computers might be incorporated into the class instruction.

There are in fact a growing number of research studies that investigate the role of computer-assisted language learning (CALL) in second language writing classrooms. One can begin with reading the works of such prominent names as George Braine, Charles M. Browne, Carol A. Chapelle, Sandra Fotos, Martha C. Pennington, and Mark Warschauer to gain insight into the

impact of the computer in ESL and second language writing (L2) classroom (see, for example, the edited collection, *New Perspectives on CALL for Second Language Classrooms*, that includes articles by these names). There are also books on teaching ESL writing by such widely recognized authors as Ulla Connor, Ann M. Johns, Barbara Kroll, Ilona Leki, Joy M. Reid, Tony Silva, and Vivian Zamel that discuss the approaches to ESL and L2 writing instruction. It is important for ESL teachers to be aware of the theories of teaching composition and the assumptions that underlie them. Johns (1997), emphasizing the importance of teachers' recognition of their theoretical positions, states that "an ESL teacher's view of reality and truth, like his or her view of [the nature of the writer, writing, and the role audience], will undoubtedly influence the focus of classroom activities and assignments" (p. 32). This statement points to the value of understanding teachers' pedagogical beliefs, and as Johns asserts "... our profession would benefit from a more careful examination of theories and the ideologies they reflect, and the classroom practices that result" (p. 34). The connection between theory and its application in the classroom as well as the importance for a teacher to examine the theoretical approach underlying her classroom practices are not new concepts. They have been written about in pedagogy books for ESL teachers. For example, J.T. Zebroski (1986) states that "[theory] has helped me to excavate and to uncover my own assumptions about writing. It has aided me in crafting a more coherent and unified course

structure. It has encouraged me to try out some new methods of teaching writing. It has helped me to relinquish control and to emphasize classroom community” (p. 58).

The value of teachers’ reflection of their pedagogical theories, with the assumptions underlying them, and the classroom practices resulting from these perspectives is worthwhile to explore for a computer-mediated ESL composition classroom, because the use of computers is part of the emerging classroom practice; therefore, a similar connection should be established between teachers’ approaches to or beliefs about teaching ESL writing and how this transfers to their implementation of computer technology in the writing classroom. In order to identify the pedagogical theories with which an ESL writing teacher aligns herself, this study defines the features of four commonly recognized and adopted perspectives (controlled composition, current-traditional rhetoric, process approach, and socio-constructionist or English for academic purposes view) and situates teachers within them. The study is grounded within the sociocultural theoretical framework, because the relationship between humanity and its tools is clarified by the sociocultural theory (Warschauer, 2005), which originates from the work of L. S. Vygotsky. As Warschauer (2005) suggests, examining Vygotsky’s contributions will help us understand how sociocultural theory can be applied to classrooms that utilize computer-assisted language learning. There are three main aspects to the Vygotskian sociocultural view: Mediation, social



learning, and genetic analysis. Mediation applies to this study with the idea that different ESL teachers may be assigned to teach the same first-year composition class, but their motives and underlying goals behind their instruction might be different, which impacts their practical classroom activities, including the use of computers in class. Through social learning, what this study brings forth is that teachers of ESL writing can learn how other teachers integrate computers, and how they refine their teaching due to the new instructional dynamic or conditions created as a result of teaching in a computer-mediated setting. Genetic analysis suggests that we can better understand ESL composition teachers' use of computers when we place it in its broader social and cultural contexts. For example, we cannot understand the motives and attitudes that ESL writing teachers have toward working with technology unless we assess the origins, purpose, and consequences of their intentions and actions in the classroom (e.g., their goals and objectives for the class and their students), and see their actions in light of their historical, social, and cultural context (e.g., their teaching experience, educational background, and the expectations of the institution at which they teach).

This study focuses on the following research questions:

- How do ESL teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning writing influence the way they use computer technology in class?
- What are ESL teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning writing?

- What factors influence ESL teachers' design and delivery of the first-year writing class?
- What technological practices emerge as a result of these instructional beliefs and decisions?

To investigate these research questions, qualitative research was conducted in three research contexts, which were ESL first-year composition classes in two institutions, over the course of a semester. Methods of data collection were classroom observations, field notes, interviews with teachers, audio recording of interviews, transcription of the recordings, conversation notes, and course materials. As a result of data collection and analysis, this study reveals the following results:

- Regardless of ESL teachers' differing beliefs about writing instruction, they use computer technology if it supports their teaching and students' learning.
- Teachers' positive or negative attitude toward the place or benefit of computers in the writing classroom affects how much they incorporate them into their instruction.
- Teachers are interested in and look for training opportunities specific to writing classes that offer innovative ideas on how to implement technology.

The significance of this study is two-fold: First, it will add to the existing research and literature on the use of computers in the ESL writing

classroom that investigates the connection between ESL students and computers as well as between ESL writing teachers and computers. For the former, the literature includes studies that have looked at the effects of computers on students' communication, writing process and collaboration, the attitudes of students towards the use of computer technology in the classroom, the differences between how native English speaking students use computers with how non-native English speakers use them and the differences in the written products resulting from both groups' use of computers. For the latter, there have been studies conducted on teachers' use of one or more types of computer applications, for example, e-mail, synchronous and asynchronous discussions, online peer review, etc., in the writing classroom and its results for students and their writings, and on the teachers' overall impressions on integrating computers into their classes as well as research on the effective use of technology in writing classrooms. There is also research that sheds light on socio-cultural issues, such as how computer technology creates or reduces race, gender, and social class boundaries in the writing classroom. This study also takes a social-cultural perspective but fills a gap in research, because rather than only focusing on what is seen and what is occurring in the classroom, it in a way takes a step back by first paying attention to teachers' underlying beliefs about ESL writing pedagogy and then linking this to how those assumptions and pedagogical theories about ESL writing demonstrate themselves in the

decisions they make about the application of computers in their writing classrooms. The key question that this study seeks to uncover will serve for the field of ESL composition and computers broadly, but it will also benefit the teachers practicing in the field, including the participant teachers of the study. This is the second significance of the study in that it will hopefully encourage teachers to critically reflect upon their philosophy of teaching ESL composition, especially the pedagogical theories with which they align themselves, and how their approach influences the choices they make about technology use in the classroom. Reid (1993) suggests that “while examination of theoretical issues can provide teachers with an ongoing theoretical foundation, only when theory is applied in the classroom – and evaluated – can a teaching philosophy be formed” (p. 261). The means to this end is through critical reflection by teachers which is defined by Jack Richards (1990b) as “... an activity or process in which an experience is recalled, considered, and evaluated, usually in relation to a broader purpose. It involves examination of past experience as a basis for evaluation and decision-making as a source for planning and action” (p. 9). In other words, reflective teaching involves assessing the origins, purposes, and consequences of a teacher’s intentions and actions in the classroom (Bartlett, 1990). Awareness of the implications of teachers’ theoretical approaches for the application of computers in the writing classroom is an evidence of teachers’ commitment to “paying attention to how technology is now inextricably

linked to literacy and literacy education in this country; and second, helping colleagues ... use their increasingly critical and productive perspective on technological literacy to make productive social change” (Selfe, 1999, introduction xxiii).

The chapters that follow explain and justify the outline presented in this introduction. Chapter 2 explains the theoretical grounding and background research on ESL composition and computer technology. Chapter 3 explains the methodology with reasons for research design and data collection. Chapter 4 analyzes the data according to the research questions. Chapter 5 summarizes the data analysis to draw connections between the research contexts, identifies limitations of the study, and makes recommendations for future research.

## Chapter 2

### THEORETICAL GROUNDING AND BACKGROUND RESEARCH

This study is multi-faceted in nature, because it considers the individual and social conditions of the research contexts, involves the teaching of ESL composition, and incorporates the use of computer technology. Therefore, a thorough theoretical grounding for such a study can best be explained by reviewing the literature concerning three areas: 1) Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and Leont'ev's activity theory, the latter of which is an extension of the first, but both of which are interrelated and frame the approach of this study, 2) perspectives in ESL composition, and 3) developments in computer-assisted language learning (CALL) with a focus on ESL writing.

#### Sociocultural Framework: Sociocultural Theory and Activity Theory

##### Sociocultural Theory

This study is grounded within the sociocultural theoretical framework, because the relationship between humanity and its tools is clarified by the sociocultural theory (Warschauer, 2005), which originates from the work of Lev Semenovich Vygotsky. In other words, the interaction between thinking bodies (humans) and objects (socioculturally constructed signs or tools and artifacts) is best explained via the sociocultural framework (Lantolf & Appel, 1994). As Warschauer (2005) also suggests, examining Vygotsky's contributions will help us understand how sociocultural theory can be applied

to classrooms that utilize computer-assisted language learning. In addition, Vygotsky's main claim that "we are all products of the social, cultural, and historical environments to which we have been exposed in the course of our lives" (Johnson, 2003, p. 103) provides the appropriate lens through which each participant teacher's beliefs about writing instruction, each classroom context, and the emerging practices of the teacher's beliefs in this study can be analyzed in depth.

In reviewing the fundamental principles of sociocultural theory, it is necessary to note that each tenet is explained in relation to the scope of this study. Warschauer (2005), commenting on the definition and reach of the underlying perspective of sociocultural theory, asserts that:

The term sociocultural theory means many different things to different people. Some scholars emphasize the concepts of mediation and activity theory. Others emphasize communities of practice or situated learning. Some literacy scholars have applied sociocultural theory toward developing a perspective they call New Literacy Studies. In other words, sociocultural theory refers to a fairly broad array of related perspectives. Researchers interested in this perspective will do best to apply the particular perspective that matches their own interest, approach, and research questions. (p. 10)

Vygotsky's sociocultural thought can be summarized in terms of three major tenets (Johnson, 2003; Vygotsky, 1978, Warschauer, 2005; Wertsch

1990): 1) Mediation, 2) Social learning, and 3) Genetic analysis. The sociocultural theory and its fundamental principles have been applied in many fields of study – pedagogy, psychology, language studies, math, information and computer technology, art are just to name a few. Since the focus of this study is on the connection between ESL teachers’ beliefs about teaching writing and their use of computer technology in the classroom, when elaborating on the above-mentioned tenets and the concepts related to the theory, the examples that will be given to support the explanations will pertain specifically to the scope of the study.

#### 1) Mediation

At the heart of the sociocultural theory is the idea that the human mind is mediated, which means that all human activity is regulated or mediated by symbolic tools/psychological tools/signs (these terms mean the same and are used interchangeably) or physical/technical/concrete tools (Vygotsky, 1978; Vygotsky, 1981a; Wertsch, 1991). According to Vygotsky (1978), humans engage in many social activities (e.g., teacher’s instruction to and engagement with students in class), which are mediated by all kinds of signs (e.g., teacher’s pedagogical beliefs and academic training, course goals, curriculum, institutional guidelines), and with the assistance of these mediational means, the external interactions conducted in a variety of social contexts (e.g., classroom) are appropriated (e.g., teacher’s design and delivery of strategies and classroom practices in light of the mediational means).



(Examples in parentheses are added.) Humans use the symbolic/psychological or physical/concrete tools or artifacts to establish an indirect, or mediated, relationship between themselves and the world, because Vygotsky asserts that:

Just as humans do not act directly on the physical world but rely, instead, on tools and labor activity, which allows us to change the world, and with it the circumstances under which we live in the world, we also use symbolic tools, or signs, to mediate and regulate our relationships with others and with ourselves and thus change the nature of these relationships. (as cited in Lantolf, 2000, p. 1)

Examples of symbolic or psychological tools are formal education, writing, teaching, language, music, art, etc. Examples of physical or concrete tools are computer, Internet, pen, calculator, etc. These tools regulate and facilitate not only a human's manipulation of objects but also his or her behavior. Vygotsky (1978) claims "just as individuals use technical tools for manipulating their environment, they use psychological tools for directing and controlling their physical and mental behavior (p. 52-53). The difference between these two types of tools is that "unlike technical tools, which are externally oriented at the object of activity, signs are internally oriented at the subject of activity, that is directed at causing changes in the behavior of oneself or other people" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 55). For example, a teacher's educational background, the academic training he or she has received on

writing pedagogy, his or her teaching experience, instructional strategies, and the training or support he or she receives from his or her institution will inform the teacher's approach to teaching writing and the practices that emerge as a result, thus causing changes in the teacher and his or her pedagogical approach.

In a sense, "tools allow individuals to shape their world according to their own motives and goals, and thus to alter processes that, without human intrusion, would have taken a different course" (Lantolf, 1994, p. 7). In other words, tools function as mediators, because they stand as instruments between the subject (the individual) and the object (the goal towards which the individual's action is directed). Vygotsky (1978) explains that "the tool's function is to serve as the conductor of human influence on the object of activity; it is externally oriented; it must lead to changes in objects. It is a means by which human external activity is aimed at mastering, and triumphing over nature" (p. 55). An example for an object within the context of this study would be the goals of an ESL writing course that the teacher needs to meet and the learning objectives that the teacher expects of his or her students, including objectives pertaining to the use of computer technology. The assertions stated guide us to think that external sociocultural factors mediate teachers' beliefs about writing instruction which then shape the pedagogical actions demonstrated in the classroom setting, as

well as they alter the process through which the teachers and students work toward achieving the goals and objectives set forth for the course.

Another important feature of symbolic and physical tools is that they are artifacts created by people over time and under specific cultural and historical conditions. As such, they carry with them the characteristics of the culture in reflecting the state of labor activities (Lantolf, 1994). They are made available to succeeding generations, which can modify these artifacts before passing them on to future generations. Each generation reworks its cultural inheritance to meet the needs of its communities and individuals (Lantolf, 2000). Language acquisition and research traditions, writing approaches, and computer technologies are examples of the tools, and the advancements in the state of these tools are examples of this change process. For example, literature documents changes from behaviorism to cognitive tradition to information models to communicative competence in the language learning area, as well as we know of historical shifts in writing instruction from controlled composition to current-traditional rhetoric to contrastive rhetoric to process or interactive approach to socio-constructionist view. Similarly, the developments in the computer technology have affected not only the capacity of the computers we have used over time but also how we used them inside and outside of educational settings. Big, cumbersome early computing machines have become sleek, fast, and much more powerful devices that have increasingly found their way into the daily lives of

communities in many parts of the world. Not only that, but also technological improvements have led to the computer technology to be used for more sophisticated and pedagogically sound classroom practices, with computers making the progressions from being used for simplistic language programs and word processing to connecting via limited area networks (LANs) to communicating worldwide over the Internet to engaging in online learning with the help of hypermedia websites, discussion boards, chats, MUDs (multi-user domains), MOOs (multi-user domains, object-oriented), and Web 2.0 technologies (e.g., blogs and social networking sites). As these examples show, what we knew about language learning and teaching, and the type of technology we used in the past have changed over time, with new generations researching and inventing new ideas while responding to the individual, societal, and cultural changes.

## 2) Social Learning

The second tenet of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory is the social origin of mental functioning. That is, higher mental functions, such as thought and learning, originate in social activity. This claim is captured in the *general law of cultural development*:

Any function in the child's cultural development appears twice, or on two planes. First it appears on the social plane, and then on the psychological plane. First it appears between people as an interpsychological category, and then within the child as an

intrapyschological category. ... We may consider this position as a law in the full sense of word, but it goes without saying that internalization transforms the process itself and changes its structure and functions. Social relations or relations among people genetically underline all higher functions and their relationships. (Vygotsky, 1981a, p. 163)

What this law indicates is that higher mental functions, for example a teacher's forming his or her beliefs about writing instruction, learning about the craft of teaching writing, or developing ideas about the design and delivery of the class, originate on the interpersonal, that is the social, historical, or institutional, plane – on the plane external to the individual. Examples of the social, historical, institutional plane include teacher's cultural and educational background, professional experience, the classroom context, and school curriculum under which the teacher works. Participating in the social activities on the interpersonal, the individual (the teacher) internalizes the patterns of these social activities. Supporting the same point, Warschauer (1998) also asserts that “the actual use of new technologies in the classroom is sharply constrained by broad sociocultural variables, such as the role of schools as an instrument of social control and sorting, the general culture of teaching, and the beliefs of classroom teachers” (p. 68).

Vygotsky's assertion about social or interpsychological plane's mediating function is important, because it considers the fact that this type of

learning is dependent on social contexts, and that it is influenced by external processes. By external processes Vygotsky meant learning that is available to an individual in a variety of social, cultural, and institutional settings.

“The sociocultural plane thus provides the necessary foundation for the development of higher mental functions (social learning)” (Johnson, 2003, p. 109). The interpersonal and intrapersonal planes are closely related, as external processes transform internal processes through socioculturally constructed mediational sign systems. As people participate in different culturally specified activities, they enter into different social relations and come into contact with, and learn how to employ and ultimately appropriate, different mediational means. Thus, to understand an individual’s social learning, we need to investigate their origins – the sociocultural contexts to which the individual has been exposed.

In making these assertions, Vygotsky was influenced by the writings of Spinoza, Marx, and Engels. In Spinoza’s viewpoint, thinking cannot be explained by describing the structure of the human brain any more than walking can be explained by detailing the structure of the leg. Thinking, like walking, is a proper function of its relevant organ: “the fullest description of it in inactive state, however, has no right of present itself as a description, however approximate, of the function of that the organ performs, as a description of the real thing that it does” (Ilyvenkov, 1977, p. 45). Following Spinoza, Vygotsky proposed that the explanation of the process of thinking

and learning is not to be found only in the individual but in the interaction between the individual and other people and socioculturally constructed artifacts. Thinking, that is teachers' formulating their beliefs about teaching, "arises, functions, and develops in the process of people's interaction with reality on the basis of their sensuously objective activity, their socio-historical practice" (Spirkin, 1983, p. 153).

According to sociocultural theory, the study of human mental development is the study of how mediated means, which are symbolic and sociocultural in nature, are internalized (that is appropriated) by the individual. This appropriation of mediational means is the result of dialogic interaction between, for example, teachers and other members of their sociocultural worlds, such as colleagues and mentors (Johnson, 2003). Thus, the concept of social learning can help us understand how teachers can refine their instructional methods and practices with input from a variety of sociocultural avenues.

To explain this development that emerges as a result of interaction, Vygotsky (1978) developed the concept of zone of proximal development (ZPD), which he defines as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p. 86). Thus, he distinguishes between two levels of development: actual/current and potential. The former

presents children's ability to perform mental activities without help from a more capable peer (i.e., what people could achieve by themselves). The latter, the potential level of development (i.e., what people could achieve when assisted by others), indicates that certain mental functions have not been stabilized; therefore, some intervention (i.e. assistance from others) is required. Vygotsky (1978) claims that:

An essential feature of learning is that it creates the zone of proximal development; that is, learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers. (p. 90)

This statement shows that Vygotsky was more interested in the individual's potential level of development than his or her actual/current level of development. What this concept means for this study is that two teachers may be at the same level of actual development as determined by the hiring criteria, for example, but may exhibit different levels of potential development as determined by their differing abilities to teach the same writing class due to varying degrees of assistance from others (e.g., institutional support through educational workshops, professional development opportunities, training sessions on technological topics, and peer support through exchange of ideas at the conferences).



### 3) Genetic Analysis

This concept is also known as the developmental analysis. According to Vygotsky (1978), it is possible to understand many aspects of mental functioning only if one understands their origins, histories, and developmental process. These origins include microgenesis (the unfolding of particular events), ontogenesis (the development of the individual), sociocultural history, and phylogenesis (the development of the species).

This point suggests that we can understand ESL writing teachers' use of computers better when we place it in its broader social and cultural contexts. For example, we cannot understand the motives and attitudes that they have toward working with technology unless we assess the origins, purpose, and consequences of their intentions and actions in the writing classroom (e.g., their goals and objectives for the class and their students), and see their actions in light of their historical, social, and cultural context (e.g., their teaching experience, educational background, and the expectations of the institution at which they teach).

### Activity Theory

Sociocultural theory has evolved two separate, but interrelated, branches of research, but both with roots in the writings of L.S. Vygotsky (Lantolf, 2002). Activity theory, as an extension of sociocultural theory, was postulated by A. N. Leont'ev, Peter Galperin, and Peter Zinchenco. Johnson (2003) states that psychologists and scientists have a tendency to merge

sociocultural and activity theories into one framework. This is because Leont'ev himself acknowledges on several occasions that these two theories are indeed closely related (Johnson, 2003; Leont'ev 1981a, 1981b), and it is also because scholars of sociocultural theory, for example Wertsch (1981, 1985), tend to view activity theory as part of sociocultural theory, hence claim that they represent one framework. Like sociocultural theory, activity theory also holds that mental functioning is mediated; however, "it offers a framework for theorizing mediation as embedded in, and emerging from, the experiences of others in the present (social), the experiences of others from the past (culture), and the immediate experiences of the individual with these others and with artifacts they constructed" (Lantolf, 2002, p. 110). Therefore, despite Leont'ev's assurance, there stands out a difference between these two theories: Vygotsky posits symbolic mediation of mental life whereas Leont'ev embraces the notion that mediation arises fundamentally from practical activity with the world of objects (Kozulin, 1990). That is, "the main focus of sociocultural theory is on the mediated function of sign systems, or the role of language and society in the development of higher consciousness. The main focus of activity theory is on tools and objects of labor in the development of human consciousness" (Johnson, 2003, p. 118). Many research studies that use of non-linguistic artifacts, such as computers, videos, tasks, have been informed by activity theory, so what this theory means for this study is that ESL writing teachers' "activity" within the educational setting (an

explanation of the concept of activity follows) that utilizes practical means, or in other words, incorporates physical/concrete/technical tools (e.g., computers) reveals insight into their thoughts and beliefs about teaching writing, the sociocultural context of which they are a part and in which their actions are embedded, as well as their approach to implementing computer technology.

According to Wertsch (1985), the fundamental question raised by activity theory is “What is the individual or group doing in a particular setting?” (p. 211). Setting, in Leont’ev’s terms, does not only mean the physical or perceptual context in which humans function; rather it refers to the sociocultural interpretation or creation that is imposed on the context by the participants. Some examples of activity settings would be education, work, worship, and leisure time. (Wertch, 1985, pp. 203-212). As Leont’ev (1981a) shows, the response to the question above must be formulated on three distinct levels of analysis: motive, action (goal), and operations (specific conditions). The level of motive answers why something is done, the level of action (goal) answers what is done, and the level of operations answers how it is done. These three levels show that “human sociocultural activity is comprised of contextual, intentional, and circumstantial dimensions” (Lantolf, 2002, p. 21), which provides a thorough examination of a particular activity. The structure of activity is a feature that does not appear in sociocultural theory; therefore, it is important to include in this study to understand the theoretical rationale underlying it.

Activity is defined as the socially or institutionally determined setting or context based on a set of assumptions about the appropriate roles, goals, and means to be used by the participants in that setting (Wertch, 1985). Activity is linked to the concept of motive, because without motive there can be no activity (Leont'ev, 1981a); that is, an activity is not merely doing something, but it is doing something that is motivated either by a biological need, such as hunger or need for shelter, or a cultural need, such as the need to be literate in certain cultures or to become successful in one's professional career (Johnson, 2003; Lantolf, 2000; Leont'ev, 1981a). "Motives specify what is to be maximized in a setting and arise out of the system of relations individuals maintain with other individuals and the world" (Wertch, 1985, p. 212). The motive of teaching writing and using (or not using) computer technology in the classroom setting might vary among ESL teachers; therefore, what is "maximized" (and accordingly what is minimized) in terms of design and delivery of the class might vary depending on teachers' needs, values, and beliefs about writing instruction.

Motives can be realized only if actions are performed, and these actions need to be goal-oriented (that is, intentional and meaningful). The level of action is the level of an activity at which the process is subordinated to a concrete goal (Leont'ev, 1981a). Without an object toward which it is directed, an activity is "devoid of sense" (Leont'ev, 1981a, p. 48). Thus, "to say that an individual is engaged in a particular activity tells us nothing to the means-

end relationship involved; it just tells us that the individual is functioning in a socioculturally defined context” (Wertsch, 1985, p. 203). The goal of an activity functions as “a kind of regulator of the activity”, and it can be broken down into sub-goals (Lantolf, 2002, p. 18). To use the previous example, in order to become successful, the individual may need to take actions such as taking classes or attending workshops. Similarly, a teacher may have the motive of incorporating technology into his or her instruction effectively, but in order to do this, he or she must take the action of educating himself or herself about the topic, and in order to fulfill this goal, he or she must realize the sub-goal of taking classes, attending trainings, or seeking technical support about this topic.

Knowledge of the structure of activity is important, because “the motives and goals of particular activity can be linked to different goals and motives and different concrete activities can be linked to the same motives and goals” (Lantolf, 2000, p. 8); therefore, what distinguishes one activity from the other is not their realization but their motives. That is, two activities may be realized differently on the level of action, but because their motives are the same, these activities are viewed as identical, or two activities may be the same on the level of action, but because they are associated with different motives, these activities are viewed differently (Johnson, 2003). For example, two students attending the same writing class follow directions and complete requirements in a similar fashion, and the

outcome of their actions is the same (e.g., passing the class or graduating), but the motives of these students are different; for example, one is attending the class because of personal interest in the subject of writing, the other just to fulfill the general education requirement. In this situation, these two students are participating in two different activities. By the same token, when different ESL teachers are assigned to perform the same of action of teaching a first-year composition course, if the motives and goals behind their instruction are different, then this would mean that these teachers are participating in two different activities, which would be evidenced in their classroom practice by the pedagogical choices they make in regards to teaching writing and the extent to which they integrate computers into their instruction.

Another important feature of goals and actions is that “goals are not physical objects but phenomena of anticipatory reflection, and such permit one to compare and evaluate intended and actual outcomes of activity before the activity is concretely operationalized” (Lomov, 1982, p. 72). Thus, inquiring about teachers’ goals and beliefs about writing education might allow an outsider to compare and evaluate in advance the outcome of these teachers’ concrete operationalization of their beliefs within the classroom context. Goals, once formed, are not stable. “Individuals, as agents active in creating their world, can modify, postpone, or even abandon goals altogether” (Lantolf, 2002, p. 19). This can be also said about writing teachers in that the

academic and professional development activities teachers take part in would help them to be more knowledgeable so that they would have the ability to alter completely or modify the goals they might have set for themselves at the beginning or during the process of teaching. Also, another feature to note here is that “any action can be embedded in a different activity” (Lantolf, 2002, p. 19). For example, the goal of teaching writing can be realized in a university, community college, or intensive language program setting. In each case, the action of teaching writing may take on a different meaning.

#### Background Research on ESL Composition: Perspectives, Principles, Models

This section, in light of literature review, explains ESL writing traditions and approaches. These are tied to analyzing participant teachers’ beliefs about teaching and learning writing discussed in the study.

Background research on the approaches to teaching ESL composition is necessary to gain a complete picture of the field of ESL writing and to better understand the analysis of the classroom contexts, observations, and interviews with the participant teachers discussed in the Data Analysis chapter. Thus, this section provides a historical account of the perspectives or models that have shaped the field of ESL writing and teachers’ classroom practices. In researching the developments that have been written about in the literature, several critical sources by prominent scholars of the field (e.g., Barbara Kroll, Joy M. Reid, Tony Silva, Ann M. Johns, Ilona Leki, Ulla

Connor, Robert Kaplan, Ann Raimes, Linda Harklau, Martha C. Pennington, Vivian Zamel, Mark Warschauer, Tiffany Santos, Dana R. Ferris, John Hedgcock, Nancy Arapoff, Dwight Atkinson, Cherry Campbell, Mary Farmer) – sources that are often cited in books and articles on ESL writing – have been reviewed. This section is an objective report of the history of the traditions and models that have informed ESL composition. However, this section has been written not only by a researcher as an outsider looking in, but also by a researcher who has experienced these changes first-hand over a period of more than twenty years as a writing teacher who has taught abroad (in Turkey) and in the United States as an ESL teacher, as a teacher of mainstream college writing courses for native-English speaking students in the United States, and as a student who learned English as a second language. Therefore, this unique, combined personal experience allows me to have an insight about the field and the changes in the direction ESL writing instruction has taken over the years. Hence, this section has also been written by an insider whose personal experiences are in congruent with what is reported here.

The field of ESL academic writing continually reinvents itself with a move of approaches emerging then leaving their place to other new principles or models. Commenting on the evolvement of the ESL writing field, Silva (1990) states:



The history of ESL composition since about 1945 – the beginning of the modern era of second language teaching in the United States – can be viewed as a succession of approaches or orientations to L2 writing, a cycle in which particular approaches achieve dominance and then fade, but never really disappear (p. 11).... [The developments in ESL composition pedagogy] also illustrate the workings of a rather unproductive approach cycle. This cycle – a result of the desire for a simple answer to a complex question – seems to be comprised of five phases: 1) an approach is conceptualized and formulated in a rather limited fashion; 2) it is enthusiastically (some would say evangelically) promoted; 3) it is accepted uncritically; 4) it is rejected; and 5) a shiny new (but not always improved) approach takes its place. (p. 18)

In addition to this dynamic that is a characteristic of the field, another point that is often discussed is how first language (L1) studies inform second language writing approaches, and perspectives on ESL academic writing follow the historical changes in L1 composition studies. Silva (1990) also emphasizes this point: “There is no doubt that developments in ESL composition have been influenced by and, to a certain extent, are parallel to developments in the teaching of writing to native speakers of English” (p. 11). Because this is a defining feature of the ESL writing field, other scholars, such as Johns (1997), also bring ESL researchers’ and teachers’ attention to this point: “...[M]ost of [ESL composition] research and pedagogy has been

drawn, in bits and pieces, from research in first language (L1) composition, which in turn is based upon L1 theory. Unfortunately, there has as yet been little discussion of the development of coherent and complete theories of ESL composition as allied to – or separate from – the various theories of L1 composition” (p. 24).

However, the unique context of ESL composition has also necessitated somewhat distinct perspectives and models, such as controlled composition (also referred to as guided composition or formalist approach) as influenced by second language learning methods (e.g., oral approach, audiolingual method, structural linguistics, and behaviorist psychology) of its time in the mid 1940s continuing on to mid 1960s, and also contrastive rhetoric – an ESL version of current-traditional rhetoric (from L1 studies), as put forth by Kaplan (1967), who is attributed as the leading applied linguist on this subject (e.g., his work “Contrastive Rhetoric and the Teaching of Composition”), and also discussed in detail by Connor (1996) in her work “Contrastive Rhetoric: Cross-Cultural Aspects of Second-Language Writing”.

What follows is a discussion of the orientations, principles, and implications of the four most influential approaches to ESL composition instruction that provides a coherent context for understanding, describing, and analyzing the academic settings, classroom practices, teachers’ feedback, and observations included in this study.

### Controlled Composition (Guided Composition or Formalist Approach)

As the terms, “controlled,” “guided,” “formal,” used to describe this approach suggest, the methodology emphasized in this type of instruction is formal accuracy or linguistic accuracy and correctness with exercises designed to having students drill patterns to gain mastery of grammar and produce error-free sentences. Influenced by the objectives of the audiolingual method of second language teaching and its use of the habit formation technique, accurate pronunciation, quick and accurate response in speaking, vocabulary to use with grammar patterns to express oneself are emphasized. Rigidly controlled exercises of habit formation (i.e., practice through repetitions of the previously learned discrete units of language) are designed to avoid errors caused by first language interference and to positively reinforce appropriate second language behavior. The instructor makes use of positive reinforcement technique to encourage good language habits and rapid pacing of drills to encourage overlearning of language structures so that students can answer automatically, presumably without stopping to think to show that a particular sentence has become second nature to students, hence it has been learned.

Such an approach to teaching has its roots in oral approach, the precursor of the audiolingual method of second language teaching, which advocates the notions that language is speech (from structural linguistics) and that learning is habit formation (from behaviorist psychology). Given

these basic notions, gaining perfect oral habits takes precedence over acquiring writing skills; that is, priority is placed on the development of listening and speaking skills first, and reading and writing skills are introduced later, after oral skills are mastered. Writing is used as a tool to help students memorize correct grammatical structures and vocabulary items; that is, it is used essentially as reinforcement for oral habits. Charles Fries (1945), a well-known advocate of the oral approach, represents this general opinion of the time and asserts his perspective to teaching language by stating that “even written exercises might be part of the work” (p. 8). This suggests that writing is addressed only as an afterthought, a secondary concern in language teaching and learning. In other words, as Rivers (1968) suggests, writing functions as “the handmaid of the other skills (listening, speaking, and reading), which must not take precedence as a major skill to be developed” (p. 241) ... and must be considered as a service activity rather than as an end in itself” (p. 258).

In this composition model, students’ writing is controlled in that free composition or student-originated discourse based on creativity to produce original texts is neither taught nor encouraged. Students’ writing is guided by only examples given to them so that they can manipulate these examples to imitate similar sentences of their own. The extent of student writing is limited to memorizing dialogues by first rewriting the sentences that teach a new grammar rule or new vocabulary several times, then creating original

sentence structures that resemble much of the previously memorized model passages through substitutions, transformations, expansions, and completions. Hence, in this approach, the writer is simply a manipulator of previously learned structures. The audience or reader is the ESL teacher in the role of editor or proofreader who is not especially interested in the quality of ideas or how ideas are expressed but concerned primarily with formal linguistic features. The text becomes a collection of sentence patterns and vocabulary items, which is utilized for language practice (Silva, 1990; Johns (1997); Reid (1993).

Although suggestions were made, for example, by Breire (1966) in her work “Quantity Before Quality in Second Language Composition,” that written exercises should take the form of free composition to extend the language control of the students and to promote fluency in writing, such ideas have been rejected by others, such as Pincas (1962, 1964), Moody (1965), Praninskas (1965), Spencer (1965), Dykstra and Paulston (1967), and Ross (1968). Pincas (1962) stated that this was a “naïve traditional view ... in direct opposition to the expressed ideals of scientific habit forming teaching methods” (p. 185) and that “the reverence for original creative language dies hard. People find it difficult to accept the fact that the use of language is the manipulation of fixed patterns; that these patterns are learned by imitation; and that not until they have been learned can originality occurs in the

manipulation of patterns or in the choice of variables within the patterns” (p. 186).

Controlled composition was one of the instructional models that was used in the English courses I took back in Turkey. All of the principles explained above were used in my classes. Although that was years ago, it is still possible to see the use of this approach in ESL classrooms, as I did in the courses I have observed (at various other occasions) that were taught by both native and non-native English speaking teachers in the intensive language programs and college-level classes in the United States. In fact, to attest to this point, Silva (1990) also asserts, “While some might feel that the controlled composition approach is no longer operative in ESL composition, my own feeling is that it is still alive and well in many ESL composition classrooms and textbooks, even though it is addressed only infrequently these days in the professional literature (typically for ritual condemnation)” (p. 13).

#### Current-Traditional Rhetoric

During the mid 1960s, dissatisfaction with controlled composition because of its main emphasis on building grammatical sentences and teaching spoken language, but its negligence of writing as an area of study brought about a new take on ESL composition instruction. Commenting on the reasons for this change in direction, Connor (1996) states:

Reasons for this change are many: the increased understanding of language learners’ needs to read and write in the target language; the

enhanced interdisciplinary approach to studying second language acquisition through educational, rhetorical, and anthropological methods; and new trends in linguistics. These new trends emphasize discourse analyses (analyses that extend beyond the sentence level) and include descriptions of sociolinguistic variations such as the different speech patterns of men and women and of speakers of different dialects of the same language. (p. 5)

This new perspective to ESL writing instruction was informed by the practices that were taking place in L1 writing classrooms (i.e., mainstream college composition classes for native speakers of English). Although the ESL composition field adopted principles from the native-speaker composition instruction, it created its own version of current-traditional rhetoric by combining the L1 version with Kaplan's contrastive rhetoric paradigm. This new trend seemed to be a bridge between controlled and free writing.

The main features of current-traditional rhetoric, as defined by Young (1978), include "the emphasis on the composed product rather than the composing process; the analysis of discourse into words, sentences and paragraphs; the classification of discourse into description, narration, exposition, and argument; the strong concern with usage (syntax, spelling, punctuation) and with style (economy, clarity, emphasis); the preoccupation with the informal essay and the research paper" (p. 31). Berlin (1987), who is commonly cited in L1 composition studies, also states that the goal of this

approach is “to give advanced instruction in the principles of composition which will enable the student to write unified and coherent, if not emphatic, exposition” (p. 41). In this model, “primary emphasis [is] on superficial correctness – on matters of form, grammar, and usage – even though individual thinking, that is, dealing with the subject in a new, or at least fresh, way [is] encouraged; arguments [are] evaluated on the basis of the use of evidence and reasoning from premises to conclusions, structural fluency, and a tactful and forceful presentation. The emphasis here [is] formal and rational, with no concern for invention and content. More important, mechanical requirements [are] such that a failing grade could be given....” (p. 41).

Influenced by these principles, on the ESL composition end, Kaplan (1967) defined rhetoric as “the method of organizing syntactic units into larger patterns” (p. 15), and his contrastive rhetoric maintained that language and writing are cultural phenomena, so as a direct consequence, each language has rhetorical conventions unique to it. Kaplan (1966) suggested that ESL writers “employ a rhetoric and a sequence of thought which violate the expectations of the native reader” (p. 4). This meant that the linguistic and rhetorical conventions of the first language interfere with writing in the second language, because the first language interference extends beyond the sentence level, so it is necessary “to provide the student with a form within which he may operate” (Kaplan, 1966, p. 20).



Contrastive rhetoric, together with current-traditional methodology, was put forth to address ESL students' needs for producing extended discourse, so the study of interest moved from the sentence to the paragraph, and emphasis was given to logical construction and arrangement of discourse forms. The components of a paragraph – introductory sentences, thesis, topic sentences, supporting sentences, concluding sentences, transitions (coherence and cohesion) were taught. Later, this understanding of the paragraph was applied to the writing of an essay, with the idea that essay is simply an extrapolation of paragraph principles applied to larger structural sections – introduction, body, and conclusion. In a sense, in this approach, “the text is a collection of increasingly complex discourse structures (sentences, paragraphs, sections, etc.), each embedded in the next largest form” (Silva, 1990, p. 14). Organization patterns and development modes, such as description, exposition, argumentation, comparison-contrast, classification, definition, and causal analysis were addressed.

Some classroom tasks that demonstrate the application of this approach are, for example, asking students to reorder the mixed sentences of a given paragraph or to complete a paragraph or a longer text by selecting from a set of sentences to help students understand the line of thinking and the order of development expected in English writing. Another example involves students' reading and analyzing of a model text and then applying the structural knowledge gained to their own original piece of text. A more

complex type of task asks students to list ideas about an assigned topic, group or organize these ideas, write a topic sentence for each idea, gather facts about the topic sentences and write supporting sentences using these facts, make an outline of all of this information, and write a composition following the outline (Arapoff, 1968 & 1969).

As can be seen from the examples, from current-traditional perspective, “writing is basically a matter of arrangement, of fitting sentences and paragraphs into prescribed patterns. Learning to write, then, involves becoming skilled in identifying, internalizing, and executing these patterns” (Silva, 1990, p. 14). In terms of the ESL writer’s role, there is assumed to be a commonly accepted, a preexisting form familiar to the native speakers, so the writer is expected to fill in that form with sentences provided or self-generated content. It is possible for the audience or reader to be confused by unfamiliar patterns of development and expression. The context for writing is an academic one with the instructor’s judgment assumed to reflect that of the community of educated native speakers (Kaplan, 1970 & 1972).

Although current-traditional practices have been questioned due to the reasons mentioned above, their influence continues to this day and can easily be seen in many ESL composition classrooms and textbooks. Recognizing this, Silva (1990) also asserts that “Indeed, one could make a strong case for the notion that the current-traditional approach is still dominant in ESL writing materials and classroom practices today” (p. 15).

### The Process Approach

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, critics of the current-traditional approach began to express their disagreement with this model's prescription of a linear way of writing, as they thought such a perspective discouraged creative thinking and writing. They felt that "writing is not the straightforward plan-outline-write process many believe it to be" (Taylor, 1981, p. 5). To them, writing was a complex, recursive, and creative process, so the writing process was described as a "non-linear, exploratory, and generative process whereby writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning" (Zamel, 1983, p. 165). It was suggested that content of the writing and how ideas were expressed should take precedence over how well the writing fits into a prescribed form and "the early and perhaps premature imposition of organizational patterns or syntactic or lexical constraints" (Silva, 1990, p. 15), because "composing means expressing ideas, conveying meaning. Composing means thinking" (Raimes, 1983, p. 261). So, as the name of the approach suggests, learning to write entails developing an effective composing process in which the writer is viewed as the originator of the written text. "The process through which the writer goes to create and produce discourse is the most important component" (Johns, 1990, p. 25), thus content determines form; that is, communication of ideas influences how the written text is organized or shaped with content-specific linguistic and stylistic choices.

In L1 composition studies, two groups are identified within the process camp – expressivists and cognitivists (Faigley, 1986), both of which had effect upon ESL research and teaching:

With the expressivist movement, “individual expression of honest and personal thought” was emphasized in writing instruction (Johns, 1990, p. 25). It was believed that reality and truth resided in the writer’s mind, thus “form and language come from content – and are a result of what the writer wants to say” (Miller and Judy, 1978, p. 15) – that is, the writer is the one who creates the text, so the writer’s discovery of herself as she is writing, her thoughts, personal experiences and creativity are at the center of what forms the language of a composition. Writing was considered “an art, a creative act in which the process – the discovery of the true self – is as important as the product – the self discovered and expressed” (Berlin, 1988, p. 484).

In his works “Writing without Teachers” (1973) and “Writing with Power: Techniques for Mastering the Writing Process” (1981), Peter Elbow (1981), a prominent name in the expressivist group, advocated classroom techniques that encourage students to take power over their own writing, because to him, writing was “magic that can be performed by anyone who is involved in and believes in his or her tale” (p. 369). Supporting this idea, Miller and Judy (1978) also supported that “all good writing is personal, whether it be an abstract essay or a private letter (p. 12).

Some of the classroom activities that were inspired by the principles of the expressivist movement are, for example, free-writes, journals, self-discovery exercises, personal essays, reflections, heuristics for self-exploration, multiple drafts, and creative workshop exercises. With these activities, what is important is for students to write with honesty for themselves, to express individual thoughts creatively, and to gain writing fluency and power over the writing act by writing “freely and uncritically so that [they] can get down as many words as possible” (Elbow, 1981, p. 7). Such exercises put emphasis on writing being an individual act, so “it is the competent writer who establishes purpose, meaning, and form; in doing so the writer creates an audience that conforms to the writer’s text and purposes” (Johns, 1990, p. 30). Such a view of audience is what Ede and Lunsford (1984) refer to in their article “Audience Addressed, Audience Invoked: The Role of Audience in Composition Theory and Pedagogy” as “audience invoked” in which “the audience in written discourse is a construction of the writer, a created fiction” (p. 160), or as Elbow (1981) puts, “move toward a condition in which we don’t necessarily need an audience to write and speak well” (p. 190), as honest, creative, and individual expression is the goal of writing in this model. “Teachers espousing expressivism encourage students to write with honesty, for themselves. Others may appreciate and critique their writing as long as the central purpose for producing text is to provide an avenue for creativity and individual

expression” (Johns, 1990, p. 30). This is one of the reasons the process approach was criticized later.

The second branch of the process approach, cognitivism, emphasizes writer’s mental process or cognitive structures and the process through which the writer goes to create text. A look into the writer’s mental processes is important because in this approach, “reality and truth reside in the writer’s mind” and “truth is discovered through internal apprehension, a private vision of the world which transcends the physical” (Berlin, 1982, p. 771). To write effectively, these mental processes need to be in concert with the writer’s audience, language, and reality: “For cognitive rhetoric, the structures of the mind are in perfect harmony with the structures of the material world, the minds of the audience, and the units of language” (Berlin, 1988, p. 480).

The two names often cited who are in support of the cognitive approach to writing are John R. Flower and Linda Hayes. In their article, “A Cognitive Process Theory of Writing”, Flower and Hayes (1981) stress “thinking” and “process” as two key words to describe the cognitive view and explain that the act of writing involves three major elements: task environment (all things outside the writer, starting with the rhetorical problem and including the text itself), writer’s long-term memory (knowledge of the topic, audience, and various writing plans), and writing processes (specifically planning, translating, and reviewing) (p. 371). The first key word, thinking, identifies

higher-order thinking skills. Such thinking requires problem-solving and planning. The problem to be solved is the rhetorical problem which includes the rhetorical situation, the audience, and the writer's goals. Flower and Hayes (1981) assert, "People can only solve problems they define for themselves. If the writer's representation of the rhetorical problem is inaccurate or underdeveloped she won't solve the missing portions" (p. 373). To solve the rhetorical problem at hand, students need to plan extensively, as suggested by Flower's 1985 book titled "Problem-Solving Strategies for Writing". Planning includes defining the rhetorical problem, placing it in a larger context, making it operational, exploring its parts, generating alternative solutions, and arriving at a well-supported conclusion (Flower & Hayes, 1981). Once students identify the rhetorical problem and plan their paper to meet their rhetorical goals, they continue the writing process, which is the second key feature of the cognitive view. This process includes students' translating their plans and thoughts into writing and reviewing their work through revising and editing (Flower & Hayes, 1981). The goal in this view is to produce writers who "not only have a large repertoire of powerful strategies, but they have sufficient self-awareness of their own process to draw on these alternative techniques as they need them. In other words, they guide their own creative process" (Flower, 1985, p. 370).

Besides gaining higher-order thinking skills by problem-solving and going through process to compose text, Flower (1979) also draws attention to

the importance of understanding how a sense of audience is developed in the writer's mind. Pointing to the distinction between writer-based and reader-based prose in her article "Writer-based Prose: A Cognitive Basis for Problems in Writing", she discusses college students' failure to move cognitively from writer-based to reader-based prose. She suggests that students be taught to analyze their readers and to appeal to their needs, values, beliefs, and interests in order to execute a rhetorical task effectively:

Writer-based prose is verbal expression by a writer to himself and by himself. It is the working of his own verbal thought. In its structure, writer-based prose reflects the associative, narrative path of the writer's own confrontation with her subject. Reader-based prose is a deliberate attempt to communicate something to a reader. To do that it creates shared language and shared context between writer and reader. It also offers the reader an issue-oriented, rhetorical structure rather than a replay of the writer's discovery processes. (Flower, 1979, pp. 19-20)

Cognitivists' this approach to audience is what Ede and Lunsford (1984) call "audience addressed" in which the ideal writing must "balance the creativity of the writer with the different, but equally important, creativity of the reader" (p. 16) by establishing coherence of text through the fit between the schemata of the audience and the organization, content, and argument of the text. (A brief definition of "schemata" or "schemes", plural of "schema" or



“scheme”, is fitting here to clarify the key point of this audience theory, as the reciprocity between writer and reader is an important discussion point in written communication and writing instruction. As defined in the Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistics (1992), “scheme” also “schema” or macro-structure, genre-scheme, discourse structure, rhetorical structure, is the underlying structure which accounts for the organization of a text or discourse. Different kinds of texts and discourse (e.g., stories, descriptions, letters, reports, poems) are distinguished by the ways in which the topic, propositions, and other information are linked together to form a unit.... For example, the scheme underlying many stories is: Story = Setting (=state+state+...)+Episodes(=Event(s)+Reaction); that is, stories consist of a setting in which the time, place, and characters are identified, followed by episodes leading towards a reaction. A text or discourse in which a suitable underlying scheme or macro-structure is used is said to be “coherent” (p. 323).) It was suggested that college writers’ understanding of their audience and addressing them appropriately would help them produce coherent writing, thus succeed in their classes (Flower, 1979).

In sum, the main principles of the process approach are:

The writer is the center of attention – someone engaged in the discovery and expression of meaning; the reader, focusing on content, ideas, and the negotiation of ideas is not preoccupied with form. The text is a product – a secondary, derivative concern, whose form is a

function of its content and purpose. Finally, there is no particular context for writing implicit in this approach; it is the responsibility of individual writers to identify and appropriately address the particular task, situation, discourse community, and sociocultural setting in which they are involved. (Silva, 1990, p. 16)

Currently, the principles of the process approach are being emphasized in the different academic institutions I have been teaching, and they are reflected in many instructors' course syllabi in these institutions. In fact, Johns (1990) claims, "The influence of the process approaches, especially of the cognitive views, upon modern ESL classrooms cannot be exaggerated. In most classrooms, ESL teachers prepare students to write through invention and other prewriting activities, encourage several drafts of a paper, require paper revision at the macro levels, generally through group work, and delay the fixation with and correction of sentence-level errors until the final editing stage" (p. 26). Even though that is the case – that "the process approach has been generally well and widely received in ESL composition, it is not without its critics" (Silva, 1990, p. 16). The main criticism is that the focus should be on the audience (of the student writer) rather than on the writer; that is, the reader for whom the text is created, which is referred to as the "(academic) discourse community", should determine the kinds of class assignments, the content and form of the compositions, and rhetorical strategies of the writer. It was claimed that process teaching may not be always appropriate for

students and that for example, for students preparing for essay examinations, there is a conflict between the extended composing process encouraged by the process approach and the single-draft writing usually necessary in an examination (Horowitz, 1986). Such criticisms were mainly from the proponents of the social constructionist view or an English for academic purposes, which is explained as the fourth and last approach in this section.

#### The Social Constructionist View or English for Academic Purposes

Inadequacies of the process approach, as suggested by some composition and linguistics researchers, have brought about a new perspective on ESL composition in the 1980s. Among the proponents of this reaction to the process approach are Daniel Horowitz, Ann Johns, Patricia Bizzell, Joy Reid, Ruth Spack, and Mina Shaughnessy. Kenneth Bruffee's, Lester Faigley's, James Gee's, David Bartholomae's and Michael Foucault's views on the social nature of writing, from the L1 composition field more than twenty years prior, inspire the social constructionist orientation in the ESL writing camp.

The criticisms against the process approach are that "the approach neglects to seriously consider variations in writing processes due to differences in individuals, writing tasks, and situations; the development of schemata for academic discourse; language proficiency; level of cognitive development; and insights from the study of contrastive rhetoric" (Silva, 1990, p. 16). For example, Reid (1987) in her article, "ESL Composition: The

Expectations of the Academic Audience” and Horowitz (1986a, 1986b), one of the most vocal proponents of the English for academic purposes approach, in his articles “Process not Product: Less than Meets the Eye” and “What Professors Actually Require: Academic Writing Tasks for the ESL Classroom” challenge the principles of the process approach by asserting that it does not realistically prepare ESL students for the work required in academic contexts due to the fact that “the process approach overemphasizes the individual’s psychological functioning and neglects the sociocultural context, that is the realities of academia – that, in effect, the process approach operates in a sociocultural vacuum” (Silva, 1990, p. 17). According to Horowitz (1986a), the process approach “gives students a false impression of how university writing will be evaluated” because the two main tenets of the process approach – “writing is an individual act, hence good writing is involved writing” and “content determines form” are not necessarily applicable in many academic situations. For example, certain types of writing tasks, such as essay exams, reports, research papers, where appropriate source materials about a particular topic are selected and evaluated, relevant data from these sources are synthesized and organized, and they are presented in an acceptable academic form, are ignored in the process approach but are required of students in academic situations. This, as a result, “creates a classroom situation that bears little resemblance to the situations in which students’ writing will eventually be exercised” (Horowitz, 1986a, p. 144). Instead, the

instruction should aim at creating the conditions under which actual university writing tasks are done.

As suggested by these criticisms, the social constructionists value the academic social situation in which writing is produced, because it affects the writing processes in that it puts social, psychological, and rhetorical constraints on the writer. They suggest that students should be aware of these constraints that their social writing situation demands in order to have a successful communication. For example, a writer involved in a car accident after a party might describe the accident differently for three different writing situations: in a letter to her mother, in a written report to an insurance company, and in an essay for her freshman writing professor. She might make different rhetorical choices because these social groups or situations construct meaning differently. Such awareness can be developed if students understand the audience for whom they are writing (academic audience or discourse community in this case), expectations of the academic audience, and the discourse genres, formats, and writing tasks used by them.

In composition research, this awareness of the writing situation in academic contexts is described with the concept of “discourse communities.” Gee (1989) posits these about discourse and discourse community:

At any moment we are using language we must say or write the right thing in the right way while playing the right social role and (appearing) to hold the right values, beliefs, and attitudes. Thus, what

is important is not language, and surely not grammar, but *saying (writing)-doing-being, valuing-believing combinations*. These combinations I call “Discourses,” with a capital “D” (“discourse” with a little “d,” to me, means connected stretches of language that make sense, so “discourse” is part of “Discourse”). Discourses are ways of being in the world; they are forms of life which integrate words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes, and social identities as well as gestures, glances, body positions, and clothes. A Discourse is a sort of “identity kit” which comes complete with the appropriate costume and instructions on how to act, talk, and often write, so as to take on a particular role that others recognize. Being “trained” as a linguist means that I learned to speak, think, and act like a linguist, and recognize others when they do so. (p. 6)

What can be inferred from this explanation is that discourse community is a group of people with similar values, belief, aims, and expectations, and that knowledge, language, and the nature of discourse are determined for the writer by the discourse community for whom the writer is producing text. As Bruffee (1986) puts it “... reality, knowledge, thought, facts, texts, selves and so on are constructs generated by communities of like-minded peers (p. 774). Approached from this perspective, writing is considered a social act rather than an individual act, as suggested by the process approach: “Social construction assumes that the matrix of thought is

not the individual but some community of knowledgeable peers and the vernacular knowledge of that community. That is, social construction understands knowledge as community-generated, community-maintaining symbolic artifacts” (Bruffee, 1986, p. 776).

The goal of instruction for the social constructionist view is to help students socialize into the academic context and thus “ensure that student writing falls within the range of acceptable writing behaviors dictated by the academic community” (Horowitz, 1986b, p. 459). Socializing into the academic context means belonging to a discourse community or to a knowledge community. “Teachers must therefore help students learn how to search beyond their own present experience and knowledge ... to find ways to immerse writing students in academic knowledge/discourse communities so they can write from within those communities (as cited in Reid, 1993, pp. 11-12). In social constructionist view, teachers, as expert-readers, representative members of the academic discourse community, and as the main audience, have the power to assess the quality and appropriateness of student writing by comparing it with the conventions of the target discourse community. This stems from the belief that academic discourse communities have their own conventions for establishing the truth, which determine the nature of the text produced within that discourse community, so that should be taught to students if they are expected to produce similar texts within the standards of the academic discourse community of which they are a part.

Addressing the idea that texts are always written for members of discourse communities, Faigley (1985) posits:

[W]ithin a language community, people acquire special kinds of discourse competence that enable them to participate in specialized groups. Members know what is worth communicating, how it can be communicated, what other members of the community are likely to know and believe to be true about certain subjects, how other members can be persuaded, and so on. (p. 12)

The understanding that ESL students should learn how to be a part of the academic discourse community became a topic of discussion among ESL professionals due to similar discussions that had taken place for basic writers (underprepared freshmen) in L1 composition studies. ESL students were considered to resemble or have commonalities with basic writers in terms of their needs and their “outsider” status in the academia (a term addressed by Bizzell (1987), a prominent advocate of the rights of basic writing students), as both groups were seen as failures, hence they were perceived to be cognitively deficient or remedial: Academic faculty has the contention that “... a large number of students ... are incompetent in the form of academic literacy preferred in school. This ‘academic literacy,’ as I call it, entails the ability to use Standard English and think academically.... Hence to be an ‘academic illiterate’ is to be unpracticed in Standard English and inept in critical thinking” (Bizzell, 1987, p. 131).



Acculturating students into the academic discourse community is not an easy task; therefore, different suggestions have been made for an instructional solution. For example, Bizzell (1987) suggested that rather than forcing students to acquire academic literacy and become part of the academic discourse community, it should be the academy that must change to adapt to the needs of the many cultures that the students represent. Others such as Shaughnessy (1977), Spack (1988), Johns (1988), Gee (1989), and Horowitz (1992) supported a more pragmatic solution by suggesting that teachers should understand what academic literacy means and how to most effectively introduce it into English for academic purposes classes. Shaughnessy (1977), for example, in her work “Errors and Expectations” recommends that teachers should not only identify students’ errors but also explore the linguistic and cultural reasons for the errors:

What has been so damaging about the experience of BW and LEP [basic writing and limited English proficiency] students with written English is that it has been so confusing, and worse, that they have become resigned to this confusion, to not knowing, to the substitution of protective tactics or private systems or makeshift strategies for genuine mastery of written English in any form.... Such was the quality of their instruction that no one saw the intelligence of their mistakes or thought to harness that intelligence in the service of learning. (pp. 10-11)

Spack (1988) and Horowitz (1992), in their works “Initiating ESL Students into Academic Discourse Community” and “ESL Writing Assessments: Contradictions and Resolutions” respectively assert that there is a general set of tasks and a basic academic language that ESL teachers should present to students. They encourage the teaching of the conventions of academic prose, not so much because they are correct, but because they fulfill the expectations of the academic audience. To them, once the academic language and conventions are presented to students, task and language transferal can take place. Similarly, in “The Discourse Communities Dilemma: Identifying Transferable Skills for the Academic Milieu”, Johns (1988) states that teachers should identify these transferable skills and provide opportunities for task practice in ESL classrooms. This is what also Gee (1989) addresses as “enculturation” or “apprenticeship” of the student: “[Discourses are mastered] by enculturation (apprenticeship) into social practices through scaffolded and supported interaction with people who have already mastered the Discourse.... If you have no access to the social practice, you don’t get in the Discourse, you don’t have it” (p. 7). “Appropriation” of discourse is another term used to describe the process that students go through as they learn to “talk like linguists” or as the member of any group they belong. Such process requires students to be aware that the academic community has cultural, social, and rhetorical expectations that they need to acquire to

empower themselves or to “invent the university,” as Bartholomae (1985) suggests, for their specific circumstance:

Every time a student sits down to write for us, he has to invent the university for the occasion – invent the university, that is, or a branch of it, like History or Anthropology or Economics or English. The student has to learn how to speak our language, to speak as we do, to try on the peculiar ways of knowing, selecting, evaluating, reporting, concluding, and arguing that define the discourse of our community.... The students have to appropriate (or be appropriated by) a specialized discourse, and they have to do this as though they were easily and comfortably one with their audience, as though they were members of the academy, or historians or anthropologists or economists; they have to invent the university by assembling and mimicking its language, finding some compromise between idiosyncrasy, a personal history, and the requirements of convention, the history of a discipline. They must learn to speak our language. (p. 134)

Alternatively, there are also other ESL specialists who disagree with teaching only general academic tasks, as they believe that each classroom and each discourse community has unique characteristics that must be revealed. For example, in “Argumentation in Academic Discourse Communities: There are Differences”, Connor and Johns (1989) explain that

approaches to argumentation differ between businesspeople and engineers and that also scientific articles have their own special features.

In sum, highlighting the key principles of the English for academic purposes orientation, Silva (1990) reports:

[W]riting is the production of prose that will be acceptable at an American academic institution, and learning to write is part of becoming socialized to the academic community – finding out what is expected and trying to approximate it. The writer is pragmatic and oriented primarily toward academic success, meeting standards and requirements. The reader is a seasoned member of the hosting academic community who has well-developed schemata for academic discourse and clear and stable views of what is appropriate. The text is a more or less conventional response to a particular task type that falls into a recognizable genre. The context is, of course, the academic community and the typical tasks associated with it. (p. 17)

#### Background Research on Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) with a Focus on ESL Writing Instruction

This section, in light of literature review, explains the trends and developments in computer technology in the ESL writing classroom. These are linked to understanding participant teachers' use of computers in class.

With the advent of computer-assisted language learning (CALL), computer-mediated communication (CMC), networked multimedia, and the

Internet, ESL writing teachers are getting more opportunities for using computer technology in innovative and creative ways in the classroom. Pennington (2003, 2004), among others (e.g., Kern, Ware, and Warschauer, 2008; Warschauer, 2004a, Fotos and Browne, 2004; Warschauer and Meskill, 2000; Chapelle, 2000, Kern and Warchauer, 2000) emphasize the rapid development and pervasive influence of electronic media in students' lives, and how it is important for teachers to have an understanding of these media and the ways in which they impact language learning and teaching. Pennington (2003), in her article "The Impact of the Computer in Second-Language Writing" maintains:

As the communicator of the present day and especially of the future is inevitably linked to electronic media, those charged with instructing ESL students in writing cannot afford to remain outside these developments, teaching without regard to the communication technologies that are increasingly at the center of their students' world; teachers should be prepared to bring computers into the center of their own pedagogical practice. The modern ESL writing teacher needs to understand the nature of electronic writing media, the kinds of impacts these media have on students' writing, and the ways they can best be employed in the teaching of writing. (p. 283)

To help with the review of literature in this section, it is necessary to define the key terms: CALL, networked multimedia or networked-based language

teaching and learning, and computer-mediated communication. Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) is defined as “the search for and study of applications on the computer in language teaching and learning” (as cited in Fotos and Browne, 2004, p. 3). Although CALL is used as an all-inclusive concept to refer to any practice done through the use of computer technology, including network-based language teaching and learning and computer-mediated communication, there is a slight difference among these terms. “Whereas CALL has traditionally been associated with self-contained, programmed applications such as tutorials, drills, simulations, instructional games, tests, and so on, network-based language teaching and computer-mediated communication represent a new and different side of CALL, where human-to-human communication is the focus” (Kern and Warschauer, 2000, p. 1). Giving specific examples of the kinds of human-to-human communication that takes place over local or global networks, Kern and Warschauer (2000) state:

Language learners with access to the Internet, for example, can now potentially communicate with native speakers (or other language learners) all over the world twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, from school, home, or work. That learners can communicate either one-on-one or a many-to-many basis local area network conferences further multiplies their opportunities for communication practice. Finally, the fact that computer-mediated communication

occurs in a written, electronically-archived form gives students additional opportunities to plan their discourse and to notice and reflect on language use in the messages they compose and read. (p. 2)

Considering the developments in CALL, Fotos and Browne (2004) claim that "... both teachers and students increasingly view computers and CALL as means to an end – the end being authentic, web-based communication for meaningful purpose – rather than merely as a tool for language teaching" (p. 7). They also speak of seven general types of CALL activity to show the growth of CALL over time and the areas it has come to encompass: 1) Writing (word processing, text analysis, desktop publishing, communication over a LAN – local area network or a WAN – wide area network, 2) communicating (email exchanges, MOOs (multiple-user-domain object oriented), computer-mediated communication – communication over a network and the Internet, 3) multimedia, 4) information literacy – ability to obtain information from the Internet and process it selectively and critically – researching on the Internet and creating web pages, 5) concordancing and referencing, 6) distance learning, 7) test taking (pp. 9-11).

The historical contexts of computers and their applications are interconnected with their changing roles in second language teaching and learning. Warchauer and Meskill (2000), for example, claim that "[v]irtually every type of language teaching had had its own technologies to support it" (p. 304). Similarly, Fotos and Browne (2004) consider "changes in CALL

models concomitant with changes in language-learning pedagogy in general” (p. 4). Therefore, an overview of the history of approaches to second language education, specifically ESL pedagogy, and research related to the uses of computers in the language classroom will provide the necessary background information for this study.

The developments in CALL have been categorized into roughly three phases: structural CALL, communicative CALL, and integrative CALL. Roughly because, as Warschauer (2004) mentions, “[t]he stages have not occurred in a rigid sequence, with one following the other, from “bad CALL” to “good CALL” because any of these may be combined for different purposes” (p. 21). The changes in computer technology were influenced by three corresponding movements in language teaching: structural, cognitive, and sociocognitive. The overview below explains how each stage corresponds to a certain form of technology use and a certain pedagogical approach. It has been compiled through reviewing sources by some of the prominent names in the field of CALL: Kern, Ware, and Warschauer (2008); Fotos and Browne (2004); Warschauer (2004a, 2004b), Chapelle (2000); Kern and Warschauer (2000); Warschauer and Meskill (2000); Warshauer and Healey (1998); Warschauer (1997); Warschauer (1996).

### Structural CALL

The first phase of CALL, which was used in the 1960s and 1970s, has been termed structural, because it replicated the teaching techniques of 1)



structural linguistics, which emphasized the formal analysis of the system of words, sounds, and sentences, 2) grammar-translation method, in which the teacher explained grammar rules and students memorized verb paradigms, apply prescriptive rules, parse sentences, and translate texts, and 3) audio-lingual method, a method used in the behaviorist model of language teaching and learning that is based on habit formation through dialogues and drill-and-practice repetition exercises. The points below cited in Kern and Warschauer (2000) summarize the instructional focus commonly associated with structural approach to language teaching. Numerous teacher-training books on the approaches and methods in language teaching and learning, such as Richards' and Rogers' (2001) "Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching", Brown's (2000) "Principles of Language Learning and Teaching", and Celce-Murcia's (2001) "Teaching English as a Second and Foreign Language," cover the pedagogical focus of the structural, communicative, and sociocognitive frameworks in detail, and Kern's and Warschauer's (2000) list below is also helpful in understanding how this particular pedagogical approach provided the basis for the CALL practices of its time.

- Some of its key scholars are Leonard Bloomfield, Charles Fries, and Robert Lado.
- Language is viewed as an autonomous structural system.

- Language is considered to develop through transmission from competent users, internalization of structures and habits through repetition and corrective feedback.
- What should be fostered in students is mastery of a prescriptive norm, imitation of modeled discourse, with minimal feedback.
- Instruction is oriented toward well-formed language products (spoken or written) with focus on mastery of discrete skills.
- The primary unit of analysis is isolated sentences.
- Language texts (spoken or written) are primarily treated as displays of vocabulary and grammar structures to be emulated.
- Meaning is located in utterances and texts (to be extracted by listener or reader). (p. 9)

Language classes in the 1970s and 1980s usually included sessions in the audio language laboratories where students would listen to dialogues and perform repetition drills. (Learning English as a second language in Turkey, I remember vividly the many class periods we would spend as a class in a high-tech language lab of its time to practice the use of grammatical structures, vocabulary, and expressions by reciting dialogues.) Accuracy in pronunciation and grammar was important to achieve these practices in the language labs. Therefore, the extent of CALL was limited to drill-and-practice programs and vocabulary tutorials that followed the “computer-as-tutor model” (using Taylor’s (1980) metaphor) (as cited in Warschauer, 1996)

in that "... the computer was viewed as a mechanical tutor which never grew tired or judgmental and allowed students to work at an individual pace" (Warschauer and Haley, 1998, p. 57). In this paradigm, computers were used "as a supplement to classroom instruction rather than its placement" (Fotos and Browne, 2004, p. 5). Although such use of computers might be thought to reflect only of the past, it is not uncommon to see similar usages in ESL writing and reading classes today. As Fotos and Browne (2004) note, "...even today numerous drill programs still exist for vocabulary study and grammar practice because repeated exposure to such material has been shown to promote its acquisition, and the computer provides both immediate feedback and presents material at the learner's pace, thereby encouraging learner autonomy" (p. 5). Ellis (2002), Fotos (2001), and Healy (1999) make the same argument in support of this observation.

### Communicative CALL

The second phase of CALL emerged in the late 1970s and dominated the field in 1980s and 1990s. The transition from the behavioristic approaches to communicative approaches that focused on the meaning of language-in-use rather than on its form was also reflected in the changes of the nature of CALL activities. In communicative language teaching, as its name suggests, communicative use of the language rather than mastery of isolated forms became the point of emphasis. Meaning and fluency as opposed to only accuracy became the point of emphasis; hence errors were

seen in a new light – not as bad habits to be avoided, but as natural by-products of a creative learning process. The view of language underlying this approach was the cognitive theory whose premise is that learning a language is an individual psycholinguistic act; therefore, language learners construct a mental model of a language system based not on habit formation but rather on cognitive knowledge in interaction with comprehensible, meaningful input. “The content of the interaction was not seen as important, nor was the learners’ own speech or output. Rather, the provision of input was seen as essential for learners to develop their mental linguistic system” (Warschauer, 2004, p. 22). Learning was seen as a process of discovery, expression, and development. The key points of cognitive/communicative teaching that gave rise to communicative CALL are that:

- Its leading scholars are Noam Chomsky (cognitive) and Stephen Krashen (communicative).
- Language is viewed as a mentally constructed system.
- Language is believed to develop through operation of innate cognitive heuristics on language input.
- What should be fostered in students is ongoing development of interlanguage and ability to realize their individual communicative purposes.

- Instruction is oriented toward cognitive processes involved in the learning and use of language with focus on the development of strategies for communication and learning.
- The primary unit of analysis is sentences as well as connected discourse.
- Language texts (spoken or written) are primarily treated either as input for unconscious processing or as objects of problem-solving and hypothesis testing.
- Meaning is located in the mind of the learner (through activation of existing knowledge). (Kern and Warschauer, 2000, p. 9)

Because the previous stage of CALL lacked giving learners meaningful feedback, in the new model of communicative CALL, “computer-as-tool” view (using Taylor’s (1980) metaphor (as cited in Warschauer, 1998) was followed by the view that “stimulate students’ motivation, critical thinking, and analytical skills rather than merely the achievement of a correct answer or the passive comprehension of meaning” (Fotos and Browne, 2004, p. 6). As exemplified by Warshauer (2000), “[t]echnologies which support a cognitive approach to language learning are those which allow learners maximum opportunity to be exposed to language in meaningful context and to construct their own knowledge. Examples of these types of technologies include text-construction software [including word processors], concordancing software, and multimedia simulation software” (p. 304). It is very possible to see the

use of these technologies in ESL writing classrooms today with, for example, students working individually or in groups to rearrange texts to discover patterns of language and meaning, and with simulations that promote collaborative discovery and discussion.

### Integrative CALL

The third phase of CALL that arose in the 1990s is based on social or sociocognitive aspect of language learning, which emphasizes the process of apprenticeship or socialization into particular discourse communities. In this perspective, "... the content of interaction and the nature of the community are extremely important. It is no longer sufficient to engage in communication merely to practice language skills" (Warschauer, 2000, p. 22). Therefore, giving students ample opportunity for authentic social interaction is essential, because it not only provides comprehensible input for students, but it also to gives them opportunities to practice the kinds of communication they will engage in outside the classroom. To achieve this goal, students are encouraged to collaborate on authentic tasks and projects, which enables them to learn both the content and language at the same time. Kern's and Warshauer's (2000) summary highlights the main features of this perspective which prompted a relevant use of CALL:

- Its key scholars are Dell Hymes and M.A.K. Halliday.
- Language is viewed as a social and cognitive phenomenon.

- Language is expected to develop through social interaction and assimilation of others' speech.
- What should be fostered in students is attention to form (including genre, register, and style variation) in contexts of real language use.
- Instruction is oriented toward negotiation of meaning through collaborative interaction with others, and creating a discourse community with authentic tasks.
- The primary unit of analysis is stretches of connected discourse.
- Language texts (spoken or written) are primarily treated as communicated acts (doing things with words).
- Meaning is located in the interaction between interlocutors, writers, and readers; constrained by interpretive rules of the relevant discourse community. (p. 9)

Thanks to the influence of sociocognitive approaches, integrative CALL “move[d] from learners’ interaction with computers to interaction with other humans via the computer” (Kern and Warschauer, 2000, p. 7), and as interaction was considered essential for creation of meaning, “person-to-person interaction was a conspicuous feature of many current CALL activities” (Fotos and Browne, 20004, p. 6). Accordingly, from the integrative CALL perspective, meaningful interaction in authentic discourse communities necessitated computer networking, which allows the computer to be used as a vehicle for interactive human communication. Learner

autonomy, which suggests that students learn better when they discover things through their own efforts rather than when they receive knowledge passively through instruction, is an important goal of integrative CALL (Healy, 1999). Warschauer (2005) addresses this point as the objective of agency, which is defined as “the satisfying power to take meaningful action and see the results of our decisions and choices,” and he asserts that “incorporating the objective of agency in CALL activities enables the computer to provide students with a powerful means to make their mark on the world” (p. 23). An example would be the difference between writing a paper for the teacher and creating a multimedia document that will be posted on the Internet, in the latter of which “students are involved in creatively bringing together several media to share with an international audience. ... The purpose of studying English thus becomes not just to acquire it as an internal system but to be able to use English to have a real impact on the world” (p. 23). Some other examples of the use of computer technology within the integrative CALL are the Internet, local area networks (LANs) (e.g., computer labs), wide area networks (WANs) (e.g., Blackboard, WebCT, and Daedalus Interchange that provide virtual space for synchronous and asynchronous communication for enrolled members/learners), multimedia (i.e., a variety of media that combine text, graphics, sound, animation, and video), hypermedia, social networking (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Google Sites, and personal blogs), and interactive multiplayer role-playing simulation



games and online real-time learning situations (e.g., Second Life, MOOs – multiple-user-domain object oriented, for example schMOOze University, and other chat rooms on, for example, Yahoo and MSN Messenger).

Besides the historical context of CALL as a backdrop to this study, it is also necessary to provide an overview of research done on the potentials and issues concerning the use of computer technology in ESL writing. Teachers' integration of computer technology into their classes is likely to be influenced by their instructional beliefs and pedagogical approaches to teaching writing, but their knowledge (or lack thereof) of various technologies may also factor into the extent they use computers in the classroom. As Pennington (2003) puts it:

As in all other cases in which new technologies or teaching approaches are introduced, teachers' and learners' behavior is dictated by their knowledge and understanding of the innovation.... When the teachers' and learners' knowledge and attitudes are favorable, that is, when their cognitive-affective response to [new technology] is positive, in the process of learning about the medium, they will gradually experience positive effects on their writing behavior. (p. 287)

Regarding the potentials of computers for ESL writers, Pennington (2003) lists the following points: Computer assistance in the way of mechanical tools and an environment to help with writing, revising, and dissemination of text; increased writing efficiency and effectiveness;

increased motivation, increased amount of writing, more effective use of language; creative potential; interactivity and collaboration; new modes and genres of writing; flexibility of access to tools, texts, helps, and partners; expanded access to writing resources, information, and the world. (p. 299)

In another work, Pennington (2004) stresses that attitudes, length of texts, overall quality of writing, quantity of revision, and quality of revision were in general positive. In addition, the works of Chapelle (2001), Warschauer and Kern (2000), Hanson-Smith (2000), Egbert and Hanson-Smith (1999), Warschauer (1996), and Pennington (1996, 2003, 2004) emphasize the significant role of CALL in developing linguistic proficiency and communicative competence in ESL learners as well as promoting increased levels of autonomy, satisfaction, and self-confidence. They suggest that CALL permitted students to control the pace of their learning and their interaction with others, and encouraged them to become better writers because they had an authentic audience and a purpose for writing. The use of CALL and distance learning activities was also found to create classroom discourse communities and encouraged shy students to participate more fully. It was also reported that CALL activities helped students develop their ideas and promoted learning from their classmates. In addition, developing expertise in using computers gave students feelings of pride and achievement and greatly encouraged their autonomy as learners. To add to these,

Warschauer (2004) also discusses new pedagogies, new identities, new genres, new contexts, and new literacies that came about as a result of CALL.

Although CALL has been shown to produce a number of favorable learning outcomes, there are also certain disadvantages associated with it. Pennington (2003), for example, highlights three problems: “*Access* (how to ensure computer access for all, and what (if any) a reasonable limit is to computer access); *Assessment* (how to assess group-produced essays, how to assess writing in hypertext/web pages, and how to assess illustrated text); *Control* (how/whether to keep students from using the work of others available on the Internet, and how/whether to keep students from surfing the net to find inappropriate material (p. 300).

In CALL studies, another most commonly cited issue is the argument of “digital divide” put forth by Warschauer (2000, 2003) who cautions about the fact that “expensive technology and infrastructure required for online activities tend to privilege the culture and educational pedagogies of the advanced nations, creating a hegemonic “digital divide” between technological “haves” and “have nots” (as cited in Fotos and Browne, 2004, p. 7). Along similar line, another popular argument is by Hawisher and Selfe (2000) who assert that:

The Web is a complicated and contested site for postmodern literacy practices. This site is characterized by a strongly influential set of tendential cultural forces, primarily oriented toward the values of the

white, western industrialized nations that were responsible for designing and building the network and that continue to exert power within it. Hence, this system of networked computers is far from world-wide; it does not provide a culturally neutral conduit for the transmission of information; it is not a culturally neutral or innocent communication landscape open to the literacy practices and values of all global citizens. (p. 15)

After having approached the topic of this study from a theoretical perspective and reviewed relevant background research, the next step is to examine the methodology of the study.

## Chapter 3

### METHODOLOGY

To describe the system of methods used to carry out this study thoroughly, it is necessary provide details for the research type, contexts and participants, data collection, and researcher's role. Several key words characterize the research type used in this study: Qualitative, exploratory-interpretive, related to naturalistic-ecological hypothesis and qualitative-phenomenological hypothesis, contextual, unobtrusive, longitudinal, organic, based on observational case studies, inductive, and emergent research design. As for the research contexts and participants, natural setting, participant perspectives, and convenience sampling are the defining words. Direct data collection, semi-structured interview format, narrative descriptions, descriptive-interpretive-reflective data, situational data analysis, and process oriented are what characterize the data collection process. The researcher's role in this study is observer participant. The remaining chapter elaborates on the characteristics listed above, explains how they make up the study, and provides reasoning for the decisions to use the procedures and methods selected.

#### Research Type

The main quality that describes this study is that it follows the principles of qualitative research, so this section explains what qualitative research entails and why this type of research was preferred.

Research designs have traditionally been categorized into two major groups due to their distinctive principles: Quantitative and Qualitative. Quantitative research, metaphorically defined as 'hard research', is "obtrusive and controlled, objective, generalizable, outcome oriented, and assumes the existence of 'facts' which are external to and independent of the observer and researcher" (Nunan, 1986, p. 3). Qualitative research, on the other hand, assumes "[that] all knowledge is relative, that there is a subjective element to all knowledge and research, and that holistic, ungeneralizable studies are justifiable (an ungeneralizable study is one in which the insights and outcomes generated by the research cannot be applied to contexts or situations beyond those in which the data were collected)" (Nunan, 1986, p. 3). Features commonly associated with these two paradigms are outlined by Reichardt and Cook (1979):

- Quantitative Research: Advocates the use of quantitative methods, seeks facts or causes of social phenomena without regard to the subjective states of the individuals, obtrusive and controlled measurement, objective, removed from the data: the 'outsider' perspective, ungrounded, verification-oriented, confirmatory, reductionist, inferential, and hypothetical-deductive, outcome-oriented, reliable: 'hard' and replicable data, generalizable: multiple case studies, assumes a stable reality

- Qualitative Research: Advocates use of qualitative methods, concerned with understanding human behavior from the actors' own frame of reference, naturalistic and uncontrolled observation, subjective, close to the data: the 'insider' perspective, grounded, discovery-oriented, exploratory, expansionist, descriptive, and inductive, process-oriented, valid: 'real', 'rich', and 'deep' data, ungeneralizable: single case studies (pp. 33-48)

The research questions that this study attempts to answer lend themselves to qualitative research well. These questions inquire not only the results but also the how and the why of the results, which qualitative research focuses on. As McMillan (2000) clarifies:

Qualitative researchers want to know how and why behavior occurs. In contrast with most quantitative studies, qualitative methods look for the *process* through which behavior occurs, not just the outcomes or products. For example, while quantitative research can document the effect of teachers' expectations on student achievement, qualitative studies would be appropriate for understanding *how* teachers' expectations affect students' achievement and behavior. The emphasis would be on how expectations are formed and how they are played out in the nature of teacher interactions with students. The emphasis on process allows for conclusions that explain the reasons for results. (p. 254)

At the outset, qualitative research was also decided based on the belief that it would deliver the kinds of “real, rich, and deep” data (Reichardt and Cook, 1979) that this study had set out to find out. The match between the principles of qualitative research and the purpose of this study was another reason for preferring qualitative research. Additionally, in the field of ESL education, the need for interpretive studies that take place unobtrusively in natural settings over extended periods of time, that are based on rich narrative descriptions that reflect on the participants’ perspectives which emerge during the process of the study led to using qualitative research.

Observing the same need, Warschauer (2000) states, “... language learning is a complex social and cultural phenomenon, even more so when it involves technologies.... Short-term quantitative studies may fail to account for the complex interaction of social, cultural, and individual factors which shape the language teaching and learning experience. Researchers in education and applied linguistics are increasingly turning to interpretive qualitative approaches, such as ethnography, but thus far few ethnographic studies have been conducted on uses of technology in the language classroom” (p. 1). Similarly, Ellis (1990), criticizing the ability of psychometry or formal experiments to “produce the definitive answers that some researchers expect” (p. 67), advances two reasons for this skepticism. In the first place, the relationship between instruction and learning is extremely complex. It is not a linear relationship, and there is no one-to-one relationship between



teaching and learning. Formal or quantitative research can therefore only provide us with an understanding of individual pieces of the language learning jigsaw, but not the whole puzzle. Secondly, according to Ellis, the relationship between findings from a formal or quantitative research and classroom practice is complex and indirect:

Innovation in the classroom can never be just a question of implementing a recommendation derived from research. It is always a process of negotiation, involving the teacher's overall educational ideology, the learner's expectations and preferences and local constraints that determine what is feasible. There is no single pedagogical solution which is applicable to all classrooms (Ellis, 1990, p. 68).

This means that the dynamics of teaching and learning in the classroom can be sometimes better analyzed with the help of qualitative research rather than quantitative research. Since this study's research questions involve a dynamic interplay between instruction, beliefs that inform that instruction, and results of instruction, and as the study requires a series of observations, data collection through interviews, analyses, qualitative research is better suited.

In addition to the practical reasons pertaining to the application of the qualitative research in this study, another reason is to do with the

philosophical underpinning for the decision to carry out qualitative research as opposed to quantitative research. As Nunan (1986) explains:

[T]he two approaches represent different ways of thinking about and understanding the world around us. Underlying the development of different research traditions and methods is a debate on the nature of knowledge and the status of assertions about the world, and the debate itself is ultimately a philosophical one.... In developing one's own philosophy on research, it is important to determine how the notion of 'truth' relates to research. What is truth? (Even more basically, do we accept that there is such a thing as 'truth'?) What is evidence? Can we ever 'prove' anything? What evidence would compel us to accept the truth of an assertion or proposition? These are questions which need to be borne in mind constantly as one reads and evaluates research. (p. 10)

This study is based upon the researcher's assumption that there is a dynamic rather than a stable reality and that the notion that "there are external truths 'out there' which are independent of the observer" (Nunan, 1986, p. 12) – the notion that underlies quantitative research, is questionable. The approach to gathering evidence as a result of this assumption is inductive rather than deductive. Deductive analysis begins with a hypothesis and then searches for evidence to support or refute that hypothesis. Inductivism seeks to derive general principles or 'truths' from an

investigation and documentation of single instances (Nunan, 1986); that is, data are gathered first and then synthesized to generate generalizations. As McMillan (2000) suggests, generalizations are developed “from the ground up, or bottom up, from the detailed particulars, rather than from top down” (p. 254).

That is how the design of this study was also solidified in the process – bottom up, data first – with additional sub-research questions formulated thanks to the answers that emerged in the class observations during the semester and in the artifacts shared by the participants (e.g., textbooks, syllabi, assignments, course goals and objectives, institutional expectations). It also evolved due to the additional teacher interviews conducted in the process of data collection with latter interviews focusing on specific points observed in classes, and due to the questions that were sometimes asked organically for clarification during the interviews. McMillan (2000) asserts “... this approach is important because the qualitative researcher wants to be open to new ways of understanding. Predetermined hypotheses limit what data will be collected and may cause bias. The process of qualitative research is like a funnel. In the beginning, the data may seem unconnected and too extensive to make much sense, but as the researcher works with the data, progressively more specific findings are generated” (McMillan, 2000, p. 254).

Being close to the data by obtaining information directly from the source (i.e., data collected through three first-year writing course

observations and three teacher interviews) and having an insider's perspective by spending a considerable amount of time (i.e. over the course of a semester) in direct interaction with the settings, participants, and documents they are studying (i.e., three ESL first-year writing classes in two different academic institutions with the course materials selected by the teachers and/or required by their departments) necessitate an inductive analysis. Addressing the notion of inductivism and emergent research design in qualitative research, Bogden and Biklen (1998) state, "qualitative study researchers enter the investigation as if they know very little about the people and places they will visit. They attempt to mentally cleanse their preconceptions" (p. 49). McMillan (2000) also adds, "as [qualitative researchers] learn about the setting, people, and other sources of information, they discover what needs to be done to fully describe and understand the phenomena being studied. Thus, a qualitative researcher will begin with *some* idea about what data will be collected and the procedures that will be employed, but a full account of the methods is given *retrospectively*, after all the data have been collected. The design is emergent in that it evolves during the study" (p.255).

Although qualitative research is the overarching system of methods used in this study, case study (or limited ethnography) characterizes the methodological approach taken more specifically. A case study is "an in-depth analysis of one or more events, settings, programs, social groups,

communities, individuals, or other “bounded systems”.... [It] is an investigation of an entity, which is carefully defined and characterized by time and place. The entity could be a single school, for example, which would be a within-site study, or a number of schools (multisite). Also, in a single study there may be one or multiple cases” (McMillan, 2000, p. 266). Nunan (1986) states that deciding whether a study is or is not a case is not always particularly easy, and Stake (1988) admits that the definition of the case study is ambiguous, but he states that the term “bounded system” defines the method for him:

The crux of the definition is having some conception of the unity or totality of a system with some kind of outlines or boundaries. For instance, take a child or a group of children with learning disabilities as the bounded system.... What the study covers depends partly on what you are trying to do. The unity of the system depends partly on what you want to find out. (p. 255)

The bounded system (or the cases) analyzed in-depth in this study are the three ESL teachers who teach first-year writing courses in two different state schools. The unity of the system in the context of this study is outlined by the systematic connections between teachers’ pedagogical beliefs about ESL writing instruction, factors that influence their pedagogical decisions, and technological practices that emerge as a result of these decisions.

Adelman et al. (1976) suggests that case is the study of ‘instance(s) in action’. In other words, one selects instance(s) from the class of objects and phenomena one is investigating and inquires into the way these instances function in context. From this description, there may seem to be little distinguishable difference between ethnography and case study, and in fact, some researchers see the case study as a limited type of ethnography (e.g., Bartlett, Kemmis, and Gillard, 1982). Nunan (1986) agrees that the case study resembles ethnography in its philosophy, methods, and concern for studying phenomena in context but suggests that case study is more limited in scope than an ethnography, and Wolcott (1988) explains that ethnography is essentially concerned with the cultural context and cultural interpretation of the phenomena under investigation. It is due to these reasons that case study approach was determined to be a more suitable description for this study. Though being limited in scope is not a disadvantage, it is nonetheless the case with this study when compared to, for example, Shirley Brice Heath’s (1983) commonly cited ethnographic research in her book “Ways with Words”. What transpires with three participants in two classroom settings in this study is not as extensive in scope as Heath’s years long cultural research of her research participants’ learning to use language at home and at school in two communities a few miles apart. However, being limited in scope did not affect the extensive data collection and analysis that took place in this study.

The second cited difference that ethnography is essentially concerned with the cultural context and cultural interpretation of the research phenomena is a distinct difference that sets ethnography apart from case study. Indeed, having its roots in anthropology and social sciences, ethnography is involved with the “in-depth analytical description and interpretation of naturally-occurring behavior within a culture or social group” (McMillan, 2000, p. 255). Although in this study, based on the non-native English-speaking teachers’ comments, their cultural background had some influence in shaping their beliefs about writing instruction and use of technology in the classroom, this does not imply an in-depth involvement into a particular culture (to describe naturally occurring behavior) that ethnography suggests. Drawing a distinction between ethnography and case study in a similar vein, Denny (1978) explains, “While an ethnography is a complete account of a particular culture, case studies examine a facet or particular aspect of the culture or subculture under investigation. Despite this more limited reach of case studies, many case studies share certain characteristics with ethnographies. Both attempt to provide a portrait of what is going on in a particular setting” (p. 12).

Within the literature, a range of definitions of case study is offered. These sample definitions describe the type of research conducted and methods used to carry out this study: “A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context;

when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used.... It tries to illuminate a decision or set of decisions: why they were taken, how they were implemented, and with what result” (Yin, 1984, p. 23). “The most common type of case study involves the detailed description, and analysis of subjects, from whom observations, interviews, and histories provide the database.... The longitudinal approach could be easily characterized by at least three of the qualitative paradigm attributes: naturalistic, process-oriented, and ungeneralizable” (Larsen-Freeman and Long, 1991, pp. 11-12). “... [T]he qualitative case study can be defined as an intensive, holistic description and analysis of entities, phenomena, or social units. Case studies are particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic and rely heavily on inductive reasoning in handling multiple data sources” (Merriam, 1988, p. 16). The features highlighted in these definitions are present in this study, as explained in this chapter and the next Data Analysis chapter.

Stenhouse (1983) and McMillan (2000) develop a typology of case studies, as each type of case study is targeted for a unique need. Stenhouse categorizes them as “neo-ethnographic,” “evaluative,” “multi-site,” and “action.”

- Neo-ethnographic: The in-depth investigation of a single case by a participant observer
- Evaluative: An investigation carried out in order to evaluate practice



- Multi-site: A study carried out on more than one site
- Action: An investigation carried out by a classroom practitioner in his or her own professional context

McMillan (2000) groups them as “historical organizational,” “observational,” “life history,” “situation analysis,” “multi case,” and “multi site.”

- Historical organizational: Focus is on a specific organization over time, often tracing the organization’s development.
- Observational: Participant observation is the primary method of gathering data to study a particular entity or some aspect of entity (such as a school or classes within a school).
- Life history: A first-person narrative that is completed with one person; also referred to as an oral history.
- Situation analysis: A specific event (e.g., how students deal with the death of a parent) is situated from different perspectives.
- Multi-case: Several different independent entities are studied.
- Multi-site: Many sites or participants are used, in the main, to develop theory.

Based on their categorization, this study falls under evaluative-multi-site-observational-situation analysis-multi-case. These labels help to determine appropriate research questions and methods, and as such, they are

descriptive of the research and methodology one would implement if one were to re-conduct a similar study.

### Contexts and Participants

Wilson (1982) relates the qualitative research tradition to two sets of hypotheses about human behavior. These are the naturalistic-ecological hypothesis and the qualitative-phenomenological hypothesis. The naturalistic-ecological perspective holds the belief that the context in which behavior occurs has an influence on that behavior. It follows that if we want to find out about behavior, we need to investigate it in the natural contexts in which it occurs. He states that it would seem to be a matter of commonsense that if one wants to generalize one's findings, then the research should be carried out in contexts which resemble those to which the researcher wishes to generalize.

The contexts/research sites in which the participant teachers were observed in this study are three ESL first-year composition classrooms in two state higher education institutions – one a state university and the other a community college. Certainly “teachers in action” creates the natural context for a study that investigates their instructional practices and the factors that influence them. The research contexts in this study were determined as a result of the selection of the participants. The Data Analysis chapter discusses each research context in detail.

The second hypothesis identified by Wilson (1982), the qualitative-phenomenological hypothesis, questions the belief that there is an objective reality which is independent of the subjective perceptions of researchers and their subjects. Rather than subscribing to a belief in external truth, qualitative researchers believe that human behavior cannot be understood without incorporating into the research the subjective perceptions and belief systems of those involved in the research, both as researchers and subjects. McMillan (2000) also makes similar observations regarding qualitative researchers' inclusion of participant perspectives in studies:

Qualitative researchers try to reconstruct reality *as the participants they are studying see it*. They do not apply predetermined definitions or ideas about how people will think or react.... The goal in qualitative research is to understand participants from their point of view.... [T]he focus is on the *meaning* of events and actions as expressed by the participants. With this approach there are multiple "realities" as different people construct subjective meaning from the same event. As a result, much of what is reported in qualitative studies is participants' perspectives. Thus, in a qualitative study of what motivates students, it would be important to focus on what the students said and did, to describe motivation using the words and actions of the students, not the researcher. (p. 254)

As the participants' perspectives and experiences are instrumental in uncovering the reality that the case study research tries to unravel, it makes sense to have the involvement of the participants and their input in context without the researcher attempting to control or manipulate the phenomena under investigation. As the findings of case study research are based on the data collected from a relatively low number of participants, selecting them properly is also important. (It is necessary to note here that the university regulations were also followed from beginning to the end of the research process.) The participants in this study are three ESL writing teachers, and they were selected based on convenience sampling. A convenience sample is a group of subjects selected because of availability. The writing programs of the two schools were contacted to get a list of the teachers that teach ESL first-year composition courses. All were contacted via email, and the three teachers who responded were selected as cases to be observed and interviewed with in detail. McMillan (2000) states, "although we should be wary of convenience samples, often this is the only type of sampling possible, and the primary purpose of the research may not be to generalize but to better understand relationships that may exist" (p. 109). This issue that relates to threat to external validity of case studies is addressed in the Conclusion chapter. Each participant is also explained in-depth in the next Data Analysis chapter.

## Data Collection

Case studies place great store on the collection and interpretation of data, and questions and hypothesis often emerge during the course of the investigation rather than beforehand. This highlights an important characteristic of a case study and qualitative research in general: the fact that there is often an interaction between questions and data. This is because "... the qualitative researcher wants to be open to new ways of understanding. Predetermined hypotheses limit what data will be collected and may cause bias. The process of qualitative research is like a funnel. In the beginning, the data may seem unconnected and too extensive to make much sense, but as the researcher works with the data, progressively more specific findings are generated" (McMillan, 2000, p. 254). As described, this study also began with a set of research questions, but the generalizations emerged organically during the course of the data collection and interpretation rather than being predetermined by me. Similarly, the number of interviews and interview questions that were initially planned slightly changed due to the need for a full understanding of particular instances that occurred at different times; for example, additional questions were needed to clarify specific instructional decisions that were applied during class time, to have the teachers expand on answers for further clarification, and to be able to link the observation data with the interview data better.

The primary modes of data collection used in qualitative studies in education – observation, interviews, and document analysis – were also used in this study. Three classrooms were observed over the course of a semester to have an intact picture of each course from the beginning to the end of the semester. Fieldnotes, which were detailed recordings of observed behavior in the classroom, were taken. Observations were recorded as brief notes while observing the classes. These brief notes were then expanded to more detailed written descriptions of what was observed, as well as my interpretations. As the fieldnotes constitute the raw data that are meant to be analyzed later to address the research questions, it was important that detailed narrative descriptions were kept, as the detailed approach to description was necessary to obtain a complete understanding of the classroom setting and to accurately reflect the complexity of the teachers' behaviors'. My fieldnotes included two kinds of information: descriptive and reflective. The purpose of the descriptions was to capture the details of what had occurred, including close approximations of what was said and sometimes direct quotes. The observations were unstructured in the sense that there were no predetermined checklists. Whatever observed was recorded in a form that could capture the perspectives of the teachers. Reflections were my comments, speculations, feelings, interpretations, ideas, hunches, and impressions of my observations. They were to record my thoughts about emerging themes, patterns, or issues that were observed or that stood out in

my descriptions that were useful when analyzing the data collected. It was critical that my fieldnotes were accurate and extensive so that I could provide excerpts to illustrate my analysis and conclusions. These data collection techniques that were used to stay true to the qualitative research tradition are also highlighted by Watson-Gegeo and Ulichny (1988). They include the adoption of a grounded approach to data, the use of ‘thick’ explanation, and going beyond description to analysis, interpretation, and explanation. “Case studies involve interpretation, analysis, and explanation – not just description. Explanation takes the form of “grounded” theory, which is the theory based in and derived from data, and arrived through a systematic process of induction” (p. 76). Similarly, Denny (1978) also suggests that “[case studies] must be more than objective accounts of the case being portrayed – they must encapsulate a point of view, in other words, they must go beyond description.... [T]hey must present sufficient data for the reader to draw conclusions other than those presented directly by the writer” (p. 77).

In addition to observations, the other mode of data collection that was used was audio-recorded interviews. They were designed to gather information that could not be obtained from field observations and to verify observations. They were also used to explain the participants’ points of view, how they thought, and how they would interpret and explain their behavior at a particular time at which it occurred. “Why did you decide to do that?” was one of the interview questions used to enlist this type of information

after the fact from the participants. This is what Watson-Gegeo and Ulichny (1988) refer to as the vertical dimension of holistic research. They make the point that holistic research must take into account both the behavior of the individuals under investigation and the context in which the behavior occurs, and that there are two dimensions to this type of analysis – a horizontal dimension and a vertical dimension. The horizontal, or historical, dimension refers to the description of events and behaviors as they evolve over time. The vertical dimension refers to the factors which influence behaviors and interactions at the time at which they occur. The principle of ‘thick’ explanation refers to the importance of taking into account all of the factors which may have an effect on the phenomena under investigation.

To capture all factors concerning participant teachers’ perspectives and experiences, the interviews were in semi-structured and unstructured formats. McMillan (2000) defines these two types of interview questions as:

Semi-structured questions do not have predetermined, structured choices. Rather, the question is open-ended yet specific in intent, allowing individual responses. The question is reasonably objective, yet it allows for probing, follow-up, and clarification. It is the most common type of interview question in educational research.

Unstructured questions are open-ended and broad. The interviewer has a general goal in mind and asks questions relevant to this goal.



Thus, there is some latitude in what is asked, and often somewhat different questions are used with each subject. (p. 166)

Each type of question was necessary for different purposes. Semi-structured questions were needed to ask a list of pre-specified questions whose answers were intended to reveal insightful data to be able to make meaningful connections between observations and research questions. These types of questions could not be formulated as effectively on the spur of the moment. Unstructured questions were needed when verifying observations at scheduled interviews or during unscheduled, informal conversations with participants to establish rapport and to obtain natural, real insights and comments of the participants. The Data Analysis chapter makes specific references to the interview questions, participants' recorded responses, and data collected through observation descriptions and reflections.

The third method of collecting data for this study was reviewing documents. Documents are written records, and in this study, they include textbooks, syllabi, assignments, and course outcomes. Documents were used to verify or support data obtained from interviews and observations.

### Researcher's Role

Regarding the role of a case study researcher, Cohen and Manion (1985) explain:

Unlike an experimenter, who manipulates variables to determine their causal significance, or the surveyor, who asks standardized questions

of large representative samples of individuals, the case study researcher typically observes the characteristics of an individual unit – a child, a clique, a class, a school, or a community. The purpose of such observation is to probe deeply and to analyze the intensity of the multifarious phenomena that constitute the life cycle of the unit with a view to establishing generalizations about the wider population to which the unit belongs. (p. 120)

Such researcher role, as stated above, is due to the principle of the qualitative research, which is also followed in this study. My role can also be identified as “observer participant”. Cohen and Manion (1985) and McMillan (2000) discuss the qualitative observer’s degree of participation and involvement as existing on a continuum, ranging from complete observer on one end to a complete participant on the other end. Complete observer shows passive participation and observes without becoming a part of the process in any way. Observer participant shows moderate participation, is identified as a researcher, and does not take on the role of the participants. Participant observer shows active participation and participates as a member of the group but is known as a researcher. Complete participant shows complete participation, participates as a member of the group, and is not known as a researcher.

Given these descriptions, my role as a researcher in this study falls into the “observer participant” category. McMillan (2000) claims, “in

educational research, it is rare for the investigator literally to adopt the same role as the individuals who are being studied. There may be some participation in some of the activities, but it is usually limited” (p. 259). My intention with the participant teachers was to establish a positive rapport to collect the needed data from them but not to assume the role of them during observations or participate as a member of the students during class activities. As my participation was limited, my role in the study was an observer participant. The nature of the research questions in this study also affected the extent of my participation. Since they were focused on teachers’ perceptions and their classroom practices, taking on a more observer role made sense.

In light of the research design and methodology explained in this chapter, much data was collected, which is analyzed according to the research questions for each research context next.

## Chapter 4

### DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the data collected through class observations and interviews with the participant teachers. It provides transcripts of the interviews conducted, analysis of them, and concrete examples from observation notes and course materials. It makes sense to organize the chapter based on the research questions that this study attempts to answer to address them in a clear fashion. Thus, the data for each research context is categorized according to teacher beliefs about teaching and learning writing, factors influencing teacher's design and delivery of the course, and technological practices emerging as a result of these pedagogical beliefs and decisions. The chapter also provides background information about each teacher, class, and institution to place each case into its sociocultural context. Pseudonyms were used to protect the confidentiality of the teachers and the institutions at which they taught.

#### Research Context #1: ENG 108 at Desert University

##### Background

Vivienne is a non-native English speaking ESL teacher who teaches at Desert University. She has a bachelor's degree in English Letters from her native country, master's degree in TESOL in the United States, and she is a doctoral student, specializing in the fields of applied linguistics and composition. She has been teaching for fifteen years – ten combined years in

her native country and as part of her master's program. She has previously taught at university-based intensive language programs in four skill areas, including writing, and at Desert State, she has taught first-year writing in ESL and mainstream composition courses for five years.

Vivienne attends workshops in teaching with technology offered in the English department and the university. She has taken a course in Distance Education through the College of Education. She also attends conferences to improve her teaching of ESL writing and picks the sessions specifically on integrating technology with teaching. She has taught courses in computer-mediated classrooms and in hybrid format before, so she said she feels comfortable teaching with computer technology. The class I observed was in a regular classroom at the beginning, but Vivienne asked all students to bring their laptop to class. She said even if she didn't require her students to bring a laptop, usually they all have one and like to take it with them to their classes anyway. Later, a computer-mediated classroom became available, because she had requested to be moved there prior to the beginning of the semester, so the meetings took place in that computer classroom. The class consisted of nineteen students who attended Desert University full-time.

#### Research Question: Teacher Beliefs about Teaching and Learning

##### Writing

When asked about what beliefs about teaching and learning writing one could see reflected in her classes, Vivienne shared these ideas:

That in the writing classroom, I act more as a facilitator and that the students are the active participants basically. They have to do the work, and I'm there to help them do that, and I function more as a facilitator. So, it's not like I have all the knowledge in the world, and I pour the knowledge into my students. I think they come as informed participants. They bring with them wealth of knowledge, too that they can share, and my job is to help them do that, and also to learn not only from me but also from each other. For example, to help them do that I use pair work, group work; I lecture for some topics, but I try not to do that a lot. It works the best if they sort of discover the knowledge themselves, and so my job is to give them the background information or the background knowledge. I want them to think about the topics, apply the topics so that they can remember them better, and apply them in similar situations and in other classes. For example, in the course you're observing, I lecture on the three appeals, the rhetorical appeals, only because I want to make sure that they get the correct information. But after that, and that is only a short lecture, and I don't do it often as I said, the next step is for them to apply the knowledge into their own writing, and try to identify the appeals themselves.

These beliefs were indeed reflected in Vivienne's classroom practices. She seemed to create a student-centered learning environment with most of

the class sessions devoted to group and whole class discussions where students worked on discovering meaning together on a variety of writing and discussion tasks with her providing clarification and assistance when needed. She switched to a more teacher-centered learning and presented lectures when she needed to explain concepts that her students were not familiar with. These concepts were necessary to understand in order to succeed in the activities and writing projects she assigned. In her response to the same question, Vivienne also added:

So, besides having students discover knowledge and learn from each other, expressing knowledge clearly is also a belief I hold. That's why I have my students write multiple drafts to give them opportunities to express themselves clearly in writing. They do peer review workshops where they produce the first draft, the second draft, and then the final draft. In these drafts, in this drafting stage, grammar is only looked at on the second draft. So the first draft is always about the content of the paper in general, and it's also about organization, but more about content, developing issues and ideas. And the second workshop is on content but also on grammar, so there is an editing, proofreading part to the workshop. I tell my students that I don't review their first and second drafts unless they ask me to. So, if they want to, they can come to my office hours, and I can comment on their drafts, but other than that, I don't do that. And for the workshops I've moved away from a

model where in the past I would list a number of grammar points, and ask my students to identify those grammar points in the draft in terms of mistakes, but not to correct them. I tell them people get paid to correct other people's mistakes, and you are not, so I don't want you to the correct mistakes. I just want you to identify the mistakes and help the author locate or discover the mistakes in the draft. But now, I've found a better way to have my students look at grammar. Instead of looking at grammar points like, you know, as V as in subject-verb agreement, I would just ask the question like do all the verbs go together with the subjects, for example, and they would say yes or no, and if they say no, I ask them to identify in the draft where that appears.

The points revealed in this response, similar to the ones mentioned in the previous response, correspond to some of the main principles of the process approach to teaching ESL writing, as explained in the background research in Chapter 2. The fact that Vivienne makes a point of expressing her position on how she handles grammar in student papers shows her distancing herself from the teaching approaches that focus mainly on formal accuracy that were emphasized in the controlled/guided composition and current-traditional rhetoric approaches. Instead, she seems to side with the process approach that came after. Expressing individual thoughts clearly through drafting, reformulating ideas through peer review workshops, and



content taking precedence over form are the ideals put forth by the process approach.

To capture Vivienne's instructional beliefs thoroughly, including the ones that perhaps she had but did not execute in practice or the ones that did not reveal themselves in class, she reflected on a question that specifically inquired about this:

That's a very good question. I think in my classes I do pretty much all the things that reflect my beliefs. When I say that I'm a facilitator for example, people who sit in my class will notice that I don't do a lot of lecturing and that I always invite questions or comments from my students. And when I say that I want them to learn from each other, aside from learning from myself, I think that's also reflected in the kinds of assignments I give them or the activities I have them do; for example, the peer review workshops, pair work, group discussions. I even have my students facilitate the discussions, the reading discussions. They take turns. They choose a reading and a day to facilitate the discussion, with me there. And I help guide them to get to where I want them. But they basically do the facilitating for the class. So, I would say, I'm not sure if there is any at this point.

Indeed, the beliefs that Vivienne articulated thoughtfully in our interviews all demonstrated themselves in the kinds of tasks and assignments she used in class. And although the initial interview questions

seemed to indicate that she had beliefs in line with the process approach, later questions revealed her support for also another instructional approach – the social constructionist view or English for academic purposes. This became apparent when she commented on her goals for her students and what she would like to do more of in her ESL writing classes:

Help students learn the new discourse, academic discourse, the new language, not English, but the academic language. So, one thing I would like to help my students is to learn the academic language of their disciplines. I know this applies to local students as well, but you know, I realize that I cannot teach them the language itself, because you have to learn it yourself just like any other languages, but it would be good for me to know more about how writing is done in other disciplines, what kind of language is being used, because I only know the general stuff like for example in hard sciences you're not supposed to use "I"; you should distance yourself from your writing, but that's just one tiny bit of the whole world. It'd be great if I can find out more.

Teaching the academic language and socializing students into the academic context are ideas suggested by the social constructionist or English for academic purposes view. Being aware of the discourse genres, formats, expectations of the academic audience and writing tasks used by them are also stressed in this view. It is with this belief that one of the assignments Vivienne required of her students was called *Disciplinary Interview*. She

explained that in addition to the rhetorical situation, careful writers needed to also consider the disciplinary context in which they plan to use evidence, since some disciplines privilege certain kinds of evidence and others do not. Therefore, as student writers who may need to write in different fields or disciplines during their undergraduate studies, they need to become familiar with those fields or disciplines, especially that in which they are majoring or interested in to become successful academic writers. For the assignment, they were asked to interview faculty members in their department to find out what counts as evidence in their field of study or discipline. Then, they would share their interview findings with the class. She encouraged them to think about what might be beneficial as they enter this discipline and are learning to become its member.

Coming from a place of ‘writing as social act’ – the premise of the social constructionist view – Vivienne also added how she wanted to help her students with practicing writing tasks suitable for academic purposes, in collaboration with the professors of the academic discourse communities that students belong:

I would like to have my students do more work on researching basically, to give them more time on the assignments so that they can get more guidance not only from me, and if possible, some help from the professors in the different disciplines. My ideal course is one where I work with professors from the different department or

disciplines that my students are in so that they can sort of give feedback to my students in terms of the content while I provide feedback in terms of the rhetoric, the writing itself.

Research Question: Factors Influencing Course Design and Delivery

To determine the factors that might influence Vivienne's course design and delivery, when asked about the key features of her course and why she does them, she explained:

One thing is process, for sure, because that's the way we write really. The way I design my course syllabus or the assignments is that the previous assignments contribute to the final assignment. So, instead of giving them four papers to write with four different approaches, you know, one with comparison and contrasting, one the defining one, the explaining one, and what have you, I have them do the assignments to work on – they basically work towards that final project as the semester progresses, so because I think that's the way, that reflects the way we do things in the academic world.

A look at the sequence of projects that Vivienne decided to assign shows how her belief in the writing process influences her delivery of the course. She had her students complete these major projects: *Rhetorical Analysis, Disciplinary Interview, Annotated Bibliography, Review of Scholarly Literature, Research Project Oral Presentation, Research Paper*. Earlier projects contributed to the writing of the final research paper, and for

each project, students went through the process of participating in relevant invention work, multiple drafts, peer workshops, and instructor conferences. At the end of the semester, students also produced an electronic portfolio to showcase their work and to reflect on their learning throughout the course.

Two other key features that Vivienne discussed were learning by doing and thinking critically, both of which were underlying her design and delivery of the class activities:

I believe research is a big component of the academic world, so my students need to be given the opportunity to learn it by practicing research and to write as an academic would. To be able to do research independently and to write a paper in a correct way are also a part of that. What I mean by that is that they need to know what steps to take to produce a high quality paper, and that includes polishing a topic, researching for sources, and reviewing the sources as part of the paper; also, to think critically, to read critically of others' work and their own. I always tell my students that the point of peer review workshops is not only to give you the chance to help each other, but more the point is to practice being a self-critic; critique your own work, you know, to be self-critical of your own work, which is hard to achieve. I think the thing I'm teaching them is the skills that they can take away from my course that they can use in their other courses.

Since Vivienne believed that the research paper was one of the actual university writing tasks that her students would be required to write in their other courses, she devoted a substantial amount of time on taking them through the process of developing their topics and conducting scholarly research. In fact, to support this approach, she required a second text titled *Research and Documentation in the Electronic Age* by Diana Hacker to supplement the main textbook for the course. Reading actively and thinking critically of students' own work, their peers' and other authors' work were also emphasized through a *Rhetorical Analysis* project, reading logs of some of readings in the textbook that students kept regularly, and through two rounds of peer critique workshops that she held for each writing project.

Besides her own beliefs that guided her writing instruction, Vivienne also designed her course with the institution's goals for ENG 108 in mind. She stated:

There is no really any difference in terms of my expectations in ENG 107 and 108. I expect the same. Basically I teach the same materials. I use the same syllabus in ESL classes as the one I use in ENG 101 and 102. And I might be wrong, but I don't think there are any specific expectations for ESL here. To introduce students to the writing demands of the university, developing critical thinking, reading, and writing skills, and argumentation would be the main goals.

As Vivienne stated, Desert University has the same course descriptions for ENG 108 and ENG 102 – first-year writing course for native speakers of English (see Appendix). In these courses, developing sophisticated, situation-sensitive reading and writing strategies is emphasized, and special attention is given to evidence discovery, claim support, argument response, and their applications to academic debate, public decision-making, and written argument. Based on these goals, Vivienne provided a detailed description of her course and rationale in her syllabus (see Appendix). The writing program she works for also provides the standard policies to be included in all syllabi for first-year writing courses, and the department provides training on the curriculum of ENG 101 and 102, course design, and assignment construction for new teachers. Teachers select their own assignments, but there is an expectation as to what ENG 101 and 102 should cover, so the projects and activities for each course should reflect that expectation. For example, the focus of ENG 102 or ENG 108 is more on developing arguments and rhetorical skills. The writing program has also a textbook list from which teachers are required to choose, but if they have more than three or more years teaching experience with the program, or nine or more graduate-level hours of rhetoric/composition courses taken at Desert University, they may choose their own textbooks. Vivienne used a rhetoric titled *The Norton Field Guide to Writing* by Richard Bullock that was outside of the suggested textbooks for ENG 108 but that was still listed and used in

other first-year writing courses. She said that the chapters in the book fit better with the projects she wanted to assign and that she had noticed that compared to other textbooks she had used in the past, this one's language was easier to understand for her students.

In addition to institutional considerations, Vivienne's personal experiences as an ESL learner and educator, who studied and taught in the United States, seemed to also influence her course design. That's why, she often times explained to her students why a particular assignment was necessary to learn, how she herself benefitted from acquiring that particular skill, and how her students may also be asked to use it in their other classes. Vivienne reflects on the personal experience factor when she shares this insight:

I'm an ESL speaker and writer myself, and I feel fortunate to have come this far and to be in the situation, in the place where I am. I know I still need to work on a lot of things, but it feels like I'm giving back to the society in the sense that I identify with my students. I've been in their shoes, so I know what other professors will expect from them, what they need to know so that they can hopefully succeed. It feels good to be able to help them get to a certain place, share my experience, share my knowledge with them, because I was fortunate. I had people who helped me along the way get to the end of my program successfully, and my students may not, so it feels good to know that I



have contributed to their education, and that I, my course have helped a fellow ESL writer do that.

Research Question: Technological Practices Emerging from Pedagogical Beliefs and Decisions

Vivienne integrated computer-assisted learning into her instruction by providing course documents in the Blackboard shell, giving PowerPoint presentations, and sharing websites on writing tips and current events. In terms of having students use computer technology, her practices were a reflection of her instructional beliefs and decisions. For example, students had to type their writing projects, because she said that way, all students produced the same amount of work; they could copy, paste, move things around, edit, and revise easier; produce drafts in a shorter period of time, and that's how they would also be submitting work in their other college courses. Students accessed the articles to analyze for the Rhetorical Analysis project online. That way, she said she could keep the articles current and change them in future semesters if she wanted to. Students could ask their questions to her via email, but if they needed feedback on their papers and a discussion was necessary, she preferred that they visited her in person during office hours. She collected the final drafts of the writing projects as hard copies and graded them by writing her comments on the papers. She said that was how she was used to giving feedback but didn't think it was always the best way, so she considered trying out different methods that

possibly use technology to grade more effectively, efficiently, and to cater to her students' different learning styles better. She said she would like to learn about this area more.

In the process of the classroom observations and interviews, Vivienne also shared her thoughts about computer-assisted teaching and learning to justify why she used technology in certain situations, and how her instructional decisions and computer technology complemented each other.

I'm not someone who is teaching about technology to my students, because I've learned, I've realized that that's not the thing; that's not the point. The point of using computers is to help you deliver your course materials and not the other way around. So, you know, it's not teaching a new program and while doing that, inserting knowledge about writing, inserting about rhetorical points. It's really the other way around. So, you figure out, okay, this is what I want to do and how can I do this best, and what kind of equipment, what kind of aid or technology should I use? So, the first thing is always the course material. What is it that I'm trying to teach my students? What is it that I want to accomplish, and I want my students to accomplish? And if computer technology is the way to do it, I will use it; otherwise, I won't. And if I believe technology will help, but I'm not good with it, I'm always honest with my students. I tell them I will do this alongside with you. If you know about it, share with me. If I don't

know the answer, I'll find someone who can answer the question. That puts the students at ease, because they see the teacher isn't expert; it's okay if they make mistakes; it's okay to come with questions.

During the writing process, students completed many of the tasks online. They typed and posted their answers to the discussion prompts online first, and then shared them in groups or with the class orally. Vivienne said this method allowed all students to participate, even the shy or quiet ones, and to learn by doing; that is to practice writing by expressing themselves in writing. They read their peers' rough drafts and posted their reviews online, but they also discussed these reviews face-to-face in the next class period. She said this allowed for additional opportunity for students to discuss the drafts in detail and ask for clarification about what was provided in the written reviews. As part of the research project, students gave an oral presentation using a form of visual aid, which many of them used PowerPoint. As Vivienne believed that knowing how to conduct scholarly research was necessary in the courses her students would take, for the Annotated Bibliography and Research Paper projects, she required them to gather sources from the university's library databases. She invited librarians to show the resources available online and how to search using the databases. Students practiced the skills they learned online on the computers in class. The final requirement of Vivienne's course was creating an electronic

portfolio to showcase the projects students had produced and to provide reflections on their learning throughout the semester. She said:

Having students create their final portfolios using technology work well, because the e-portfolio is the crux of the whole course, so building a website for it is better; it's easier. I tell students that I used to have my students submit binders with documents as portfolios, which I don't anymore. I'm glad I've moved on from that. And for my students, the benefit of an e-portfolio is being able to publicize themselves, advertise themselves to the whole world. What I give them is just a template; they can build on it; they can change it, adapt it to what they want to do. So, definitely technology works well with the e-portfolio assignment. Also, I want to give students the opportunity to work with something that they might not have worked before. I did not use e-portfolios before, but it's easier to learn about it. It's important to introduce them to something that's available, something that will be around. Providing them with the experience to publish their work, which they may need for a job, scholarship, applying for a program in their department. I know there is Facebook, Twitter, and other communication technologies, but that's different. When you're doing this as an academic, as a professional, you think about how to present, advertise yourself.

Students created their e-portfolios using Google Sites. Vivienne showed them how to use Google Sites and helped them with technical questions, as well as students worked together to help out each other. Throughout the semester, Vivienne used a variety of ways to incorporate computer technology into her course that supported her pedagogical beliefs and decisions.

#### Research Context #2: ENG 107 at Saguaro Community College

##### Background

Eric is a native English speaking ESL teacher who has been teaching for thirty years. He has two master's degrees – one in American Literature and the other in TESL. He is also a doctoral candidate in two separate fields – one in Literature and the other one in Higher Education, which he worked on in the mid 80's and 90's, respectively. He taught writing and international communication in different countries in elementary and high schools and in colleges. In the United States, he taught ENG 107, ENG 108, business English, medical English, and engineering English. Prior to teaching at Saguaro Community College, he also taught at Desert University.

Eric revamps his syllabus every year, talks to other teachers about writing and technology, and does teaching buddies in the same college. He took six workshops on computer-mediated instruction, hybrid courses, and online education, and a graduate course in computers in the ESL classroom as part of his master's program. He also attended training sessions in

writing software, management of information systems, and various computer languages. The class I observed was in a computer-mediated classroom with a laptop for each student. The class consisted of thirteen students who attended Saguaro Community College full-time and were planning to transfer to Desert University or another four-year university after they completed their pre-requisites.

Research Question: Teacher Beliefs about Teaching and Learning Writing

When asked about what beliefs about teaching and learning writing I could see reflected in his classes, Eric shared these ideas:

Okay, there are a couple of things I emphasize in my classes. One thing is the benefit of writing in terms of making you successful later in life. I found that the biggest problem corporations have is they don't have good writers. The reason they don't have good writers is because they don't have good thinkers. They have people who can copy, edit, follow format in a general sense, but they don't have good thinkers.

Good writing and good thinking – that's the mantra I use in my classes.

The importance of thinking for good writing was emphasized frequently in Eric's class with him expressing it in class and with a preliminary outline assignment that he asked his students to complete for each writing project. He said an outline helped students put down on paper what they were thinking in terms of topic development and organization, and

it helped him see more concretely what direction they were taking with their topic and make suggestions for clarification accordingly. To him, it was important for students to have a form within which to work so that they could construct a logical essay and arrange it in a way that was easier to read. Students could structure their outline however they liked, keeping in mind the rhetorical format or development mode specified in the project (e.g., classical argument, proposal, cause & effect, and comparison/contrast), but the expectation was to include a list of their ideas about their topic, group or organize these ideas in the order they would appear in their essay, write a topic sentence for each idea, gather facts about the topic sentences, and develop them by writing supporting sentences using these facts. Students then extrapolated their detailed outline into an essay.

Approaching writing from this perspective is one of the noticeable features of the current-traditional rhetoric. However, Eric's instructional choices were varied. To encourage students to think to produce good writing, prior to drafting an outline of their essays, he also had students reflect on their topics through freewrites – a commonly used invention exercise in the process approach. The freewrites consisted of students writing as much as they could on what they know about their topic, what they need to more about it, their individual thoughts about the issue, and others' opinions. Eric mentioned that this exercise allowed for an opportunity for students to gain

fluency, just start thinking about their topic, and brainstorm their ideas in writing. In his response to the same question, Eric also added:

Another thing is as a teacher, my role is to empower students, to give them knowledge to survive in the university. I always approach my classes from what good it'll be for the students. I don't have them do any work that is just useless to do. I have work that has a reason for being. All the assignments I give them in my classes are assignments that will be helpful to them in the university. I have also a policy of unlimited rewrites with my students. They can rewrite until two weeks before the final class. Any papers they want. And as soon as they get A's, they go onto the next paper.

Eric had his students complete four main projects: *Argument Essay*, *Cause and Effect Essay*, *Comparison/Contrast Essay*, and *Solution Essay*. He stated that students would be able to draw from the skills they learn from writing these assignments in their other university classes. He explained that the reason he assigned an argument essay was to have students learn and show their ability to argue generically, with pros and cons organized in logical fashion. For the cause and effect essay, the reason was to learn how to trace causes of a phenomenon and defend their choice as such. For the comparison/contrast essay, he wanted students to learn how to argue the merits of two concepts on a relative basis. And for the solution essay, the purpose was to have students show their ability to 'solve' a global problem.



Each writing project was supported with relevant smaller invention assignments (e.g., completing exercises from the textbook and/or the ones that Eric provided, research, discussing sample essays in the textbook, responding to freewrites, and making outlines) that allowed students to work through the writing process prior to composing their essays.

Eric gave students several opportunities to improve their essay by allowing unlimited rewrites. He explained that he wanted them to be able to re-think, re-see, and re-edit what they might have overlooked or misunderstood in earlier drafts. He scheduled multiple review sessions so that students could get the feedback they needed to rewrite. The review sessions were in the form of in-class peer reviews and one-on-one instructor conferences. Eric devoted substantial class time to meet with his students in person to discuss their essays. His approach regarding this is evidenced when he said:

I'm pretty traditional. I like to work one-on-one with my students. I like the face-to-face, first name basis student-teacher interaction. That kind of a set-up where I can use the board to illustrate for students right there or look at their papers, not sent to me by email by actually work one-on-one with them, face-to-face. I like to work with students that way. I feel comfortable helping students with their writing that way.

Adding to his reflections on his beliefs about teaching and learning writing, he explained one concept that he sometimes mentioned in class- *emotional intelligence*.

What I want students to do is to have emotional intelligence. Daniel Goleman has a book on this published in 1991. What it does, it talks about how emotional intelligence is far more important than IQ in terms of predicting success, jobs, marriage, any type of happiness. All social indicators show people who are emotionally intelligent are far, far ahead of other people that are intellectually intelligent. And people who are not intellectually intelligent are even further behind. Now a great majority of our students in our school system do not get it all, and so I tell them what it is. Come to class, show up on time, do your work, be self-aware, have respect for yourself, have respect for other people, listen to them, have respect for their opinion. Emotional intelligence is a very important component of life and also writing.

Eric brought in the book on emotional intelligence at the beginning of the semester and defined it for the students, as he would refer to it later in the semester. How Eric related this concept to his writing instruction, besides reminders to raise awareness on class policies and expectations from students in college, was that in the two writing projects – argument essay and solution essay, he discussed how students need to listen to an opposition's viewpoints to make a convincing argument, challenge their own

argument from just the opposite angle, and have empathy for the opposing side to understand their objections and concerns so that they can refute or concede to them respectfully and intelligently. In class and during individual conferences, he challenged students' rationale behind their thesis and supporting reasons by suggesting alternative arguments with the expectation that students would be open to listening to them, and by also questioning how they might respond to them with the expectation that students would handle these objectives in a level-headed manner, all of which were intended to improve emotional intelligence.

To get a complete understanding of Eric's beliefs about teaching and learning writing, including the ones that perhaps he had but did not put into practice or the ones that did not reveal themselves in class, he commented on a question that addressed this specifically:

For that, I would say, I think teaching grammar is an important component of writing. What I mean by that is teaching grammar in context, not just teaching rules and doing exercises. So yes, I think teaching grammar in class is important, but there is so much you can do in a semester. And I think group work is valuable. I'm doing teaching buddies with Mike, and he has a different approach than mine. He does groups; he breaks students into groups, has them do assignments in groups in class. He has them even write a group paper. I don't do that very often. I usually do straight lectures. I like his

approach; his students seem to like it. So I think students' working together is valuable. I'm starting to use it more.

My classroom observations support Eric's reflections. It was apparent that he did not want students to neglect grammar. He emphasized paying attention to making grammatically correct sentences during his class instruction and one-on-one meetings with the students. He brought up issues with grammar at the final draft stage when he had conferences with the students. He scheduled classes specifically on grammar instruction during the drafting stage for each writing project so that students would pay attention to those particular areas as they revised their essays.

In regards to his comments about valuing group work and wanting to use it more, this was something one could notice in his classes. They were mostly teacher-centered in the sense that except when students worked on reviewing each other's outlines and rough drafts and completing exercises from the textbook or the ones that Eric brought in, much of the class time was devoted to him giving lectures on the board on the rhetorical pattern that each writing project targeted, explaining and at times analyzing the readings in the textbook, and defining the unknown concepts that came up in the readings. More teacher-talk as opposed to student-talk was a noticeable practice in most of the class periods that were not allotted for draft review sessions.

### Research Question: Factors Influencing Course Design and Delivery

To find out the factors that might influence Eric's course design and delivery, when asked about the key features of his course and why he does them, he explained:

One key feature of my course is I allow for rewrites, because I think there is no such thing as good writing; there is only good rewriting. So if students don't do right the first time, that's fine. I mean, I do this with my assignments, because I don't write right the first time, either. I have to also write to get better and better and better. Another thing is that good writing comes down to good thinking, conscious good thinking. You can't have an absence of thought, or you can't have poor thought and come up with good writing. That doesn't happen. You have to have, I guess, a platonic idea in your mind and try to realize it on paper as well as you can through rewriting.

Eric's policy of 'unlimited' rewrites was one of the defining features of his class and assignment design. His emphasis on the idea that there is no such thing as a final draft and that all ideas should be changeable and improved were the reasons behind the rewrites and why he approached writing instruction that way. The invention work he utilized in the form of freewrites, outlines, sample readings, exercises, class discussions, multiple drafts, peer and instructor workshops were designed to promote thinking,

revising ideas, planning extensively, and generating logical ideas that he believed were necessary to produce good writing.

Another key feature of Eric's course that he discussed was making the course relevant to students' interests and fields of study:

Another part of the design of my course is to keep it somewhat relevant, because students stay engaged in lectures and assignments when I can add an emotional attachment to the class. I try to do this by making the class relevant to students' other classes, so early in the course, I encourage them to think about topics from their majors for upcoming projects. This could be a past class they took that they now have knowledge in or something they want to know more about within their field of study. The textbook can be also good starting point for developing dialogue with students on certain topics. So, for the projects I always encourage them to use topics from which they can speak and think critically about. Most often, that topic for students comes easiest to them if they have direct interest in it, or they've already been exposed to it.

Eric introduced the gist of the four writing projects early on to encourage students to start thinking about topics, possibly related to their majors, that they might be interested in exploring. He also made suggestions for possible topics during discussions of the readings from the textbook that they may consider writing about. He explained that students' "emotional

attachment” to their topic would keep them engaged, because it would make the writing enjoyable, and it would “create better retention on how to apply the skills learned”, because it would make the writing process relevant and memorable.

Concerning Eric’s point about the applicability of the skills students learn, he shared one other piece of reflection about his course design and its rationale:

And one other thing with my design is that students take the skills they’ve learned from lectures, discussions, and projects, and they are able to apply them in future classes - be that through thinking creatively, critically, researching, or using the appropriate format and outline based on the criteria. Obviously the purpose is not only to teach to a curriculum, but also comprehension and retention of the course material and projects, so they are able to apply the skills they’ve learned in future classes. In essence, I create my assignments with that in mind.

Each writing project Eric assigned focused on a specific rhetorical model or form, aiming at different skill sets that he believed were applicable to students’ future classes; for example, determining the pros and cons of an issue carefully, making a persuasive argument with claim, supporting reasons, evidence, and rebuttal for an audience, explaining the causes or consequences of a phenomenon with facts, comparing or contrasting two

concepts in a logical fashion, and suggesting a feasible solution to a problem and supporting it with evidence. As part of the project requirements, research and documentation skills were also discussed, as Eric mentioned they would be useful in students' future studies. He emphasized the applicability of the skills they were learning with statements like "You will need this in the university" or "Your professors will ask you to do this in your other classes."

Besides his own beliefs that influenced his writing instruction, the curriculum of the institution he worked for also factored into how he needed to design and deliver his course. He stated:

I want my students to gain writing fluency and writing proficiency.

What I try to do generally with my students is to try to get them to a 14<sup>th</sup> grade level of writing, mainly second-year college, about sophomore. If they can get to that point, that's great, but over the years students are coming in with poor preparation, so that means they need more work in many areas, including grammar, but I can't go back and teach grammar. I want to, and I used to give grammar tests to review everything, but the department says I can't do that. I'm being stymied by the constraints of the department that I think are totally unrealistic. Students can be totally fluent in spoken English, but the problem is they can't spell or write a sentence in correct grammar. Now, I was called on the carpet recently because I was



teaching rhetoric, persuasive writing in ENG 107. The department told me not to do that, either. They want them to write cushy material, but that's not going to help them later. All they need is rhetoric. Pragmatic, practical writing that will help them survive in the university. Clear format, good, recognizable content, clear structure in which the content comes together - that's what I want to teach – how to make present your point logically, how to apply what you've learned, how to survive.

The community college that Eric taught for has pre-determined competencies that teachers are expected to follow in all first-year composition courses (see Appendix). Although grammar instruction is included in the course competencies and outline with such identifying words as “editing mechanics and sentence structure,” “eliminating errors,” “employ effective coordination, subordination, and parallel structure in sentences,” and “applying conventions,” it is in addition to the teaching of a number of rhetorical patterns, writing processes, and invention steps, which constitute the majority of the objectives for the courses and take precedence over grammar-based instruction.

As provided in the competencies statement, the focus of ENG 107 is on expository composition with rhetorical patterns to be taught listed as exemplification, comparison/contrast, classification, causal analysis, narration, description, process analysis, definition, and essay response. The

focus of ENG 108 is on rhetoric and composition, with an emphasis on persuasive, research-based writing, and understanding writing as a process. The outline specifies writing persuasively and its sub-components (i.e., logical appeals, ethical appeals, emotional appeals, authority, and evidence), and researching critically as the objectives to be taught. As Eric had half of his course content designed based on the competencies for ENG 107 and the other half for ENG 108 (with two writing projects on rhetoric and research-based persuasive writing), the institutional goals had influencing factor (as stated in Eric's conversation with the department) in how he needed to modify his course design to meet the right expectations. In addition to the competencies, the department also provides teachers with a list of textbooks to choose from, which Eric said his was. His selection of *The College Writer: A Guide to Thinking, Writing, and Researching* by Randall Vandermeij, Verne Meyer, and John Van Rys was due to the fact that the chapters in it were organized according to rhetorical patterns and included the ones he wanted to teach and that he had been using it for a while, so it was more accessible for him to refer to parts of it when he needed during class instruction.

Research Question: Technological Practices Emerging from  
Pedagogical Beliefs and Decisions

Eric's beliefs about teaching and learning writing were varied with all of them aiming to improve students' writing and critical thinking skills, to

provide opportunities for them to enjoy what they write and apply what they have learned in future classes, and to help them develop writing proficiency and emotional intelligence to survive in the university. To deliver his course and put his pedagogical beliefs into practice, he used lecturing, whole class discussions, some group work, in-class invention workshops, peer review sessions, and instructor conferences. Eric described himself as “traditional,” when he discussed his desire to include more grammar into his writing instruction, his preference for working with students one-on-one, face-to-face, using the board to illustrate for them or look at their papers, and his approach to teaching through mostly lecturing with gradual inclusion of more group work.

Eric integrated computer technology into his teaching minimally even though the class met in a computer-mediated room with student laptops and an instructor’s station. His attitude to technology and past experiences using it in class had to do this with this practice:

I have to admit I’m kind of a skeptical about all the claims about computers in the classroom. I think it removes the teacher from the student too often to the detriment of the students, so I generally shun computer classes, because I’m pretty traditional, especially when it comes to teacher-student interaction. That’s probably the best way to sum up my approach.

Eric also expressed that other teachers probably shared the same skepticism:

There are others who think like me, but they don't say anything; they're afraid to say anything, because the way of now and the future is technology. You know what gets me; very often I walk into the classrooms; all these computers are there, thousands of dollars of computers, but there is no magic markers, or the erasers are missing. So you can't, I mean there is no one-on-one teaching. And I'm old school; I'm very traditional, so I come to teach and bring my own magic markers.

As Eric described himself, the only technology he really used was the board and markers. He wrote on the board extensively, provided handouts for the students, and used the textbook to support his instruction. Eric stated that he had taken six workshops on computer-mediated instruction, hybrid courses, and online education, and a graduate course in computers in the ESL classroom as part of his master's program, and he had also taught in computer classrooms before; however, his past experience was not positive, as he explained in this example:

Students would not communicate to me in class directly. They were two feet away from me, but they could not. I noticed diversion to what I was trying to teach. They were distracted by the computers, not listening to me, surfing on the Internet. And I thought the class

assignments could still be completed without the computers, so I had them turn off the computers. I taught in a traditional way.

Computers were not allowed to intrude in my class. If I had to try to do it with the computers, and I have to admit kids like the computers and want to do work on them, but I would never be able to get the information to the students. That's the main example I can remember. So, I have more of a negative view of computers than positive.

It was due to his negative view of technology and past experiences that in the class I observed, he also had his students use computers minimally. He required them to type their rough and final drafts at home and bring in hard copies of their work for review. He allowed them to type their responses to exercises in class and print them for him to grade, but it was optional; they could also submit these to him in handwritten form. When covering the subjects on research and documentation, he had a librarian demonstrate the available online resources and databases in class, and students followed along on their laptops. When this subject was revisited and students needed to conduct research for their writing projects, Eric allotted time for students to do so online in class, and he helped them when needed. Computer technology was mainly used for producing papers, typing answers for in-class work, and researching. He was in support of students' using computers in class for research and as a means to think about finding the best information for their project, because that was a skill they would need in future studies,

which he mentioned that type of use enhanced his beliefs about teaching and learning writing.

When I have them do research, they can do research in one day that used to take me months to do it in the library, and they'll need to do this later. So, that's wonderful thing about computers, but it also necessitates me having to tell them what's good and bad about it. It's wonderful in terms of currency of the information, comprehensiveness of the information, so in that respect technology can be good. But at the same time, anyone can say anything they want to. You have to validate, make more of an effort to verify your sources. So when students look at technology for the sake of being technology, then the learning process seems to go away. Again, I think good writing comes from good thinking, and technology can be a means to put that thinking on paper, but again I don't want it to intrude on the thinking process the students have.

Eric explained that his beliefs about teaching and learning writing would stay the same regardless if he were teaching with computers or not, and computers would only be used to enhance those beliefs, but that he would not want them to intrude, to compromise his teaching. He stated, "If computers can help my teaching and learning ideas, that's wonderful; I'll be glad to use computers. But if they can't, if they compromise that, I won't use them. So far, that has been the case." In spite of his negative past

experiences and skepticism about the place of computers within his pedagogical beliefs, he wanted to learn more about how his classroom practices can be supported by technology. He expressed a need for more education in that respect.

I definitely want to enhance my knowledge on how I can use computers to my benefit, to my students' benefit. Since technology is here to stay, I think I would like to try to find different ways to work with technology in my classes. I want to keep on top this, but at the same time, I want to make sure all the technology I use enhances my teaching and learning beliefs. Right now, I'm keeping it at arm's length, but I know others are using it with success, so I want to find out more for myself if it is really legit, how I can use it to support my teaching ideas. But I guess I need to be educated.

### Research Context #3: ENG 108 at Saguaro Community College

#### Background

Jasmine is a non-native English speaking ESL teacher and has been teaching first-year composition courses at Saguaro Community College for five years. Prior, she has also taught EFL in her native country and ESL at Desert University for a total of five years. As an EFL teacher, she taught all skills areas, but mainly grammar and writing, and as an ESL teacher at Desert University, she taught first-year composition courses for ESL learners and native speakers of English. She has a bachelor's degree in English

Literature, master's degree in TESL, and is currently a doctoral student with her areas of specialty in composition and applied linguistics.

As part of her graduate coursework, she has taken courses in composition theory and pedagogy, TESL methodology, and computers in composition. She considers herself "well-immersed" in the field of TESL by reading publications and attending conferences to keep abreast of the changes in composition, particularly second language writing, and CALL. She follows the training sessions geared toward faculty professional development offered by the Center for Teaching and Learning at Saguaro Community College, and normally does this by following the activities of a similar resource center available in any institution she works at. She stated that she had especially personal interest in learning about different ways to implement technology into the writing classroom. The class I observed was in a computer-mediated room with student laptops and an instructor's desktop station, and it consisted of fifteen students who attended school full-time.

#### Research Question: Teacher Beliefs about Teaching and Learning

##### Writing

When asked about what beliefs about teaching and learning writing one could see reflected in her classes, Jasmine shared these ideas:

I have multiple beliefs about teaching and learning writing. I embrace the Vygotskian approach where you need to teach students, but at the



same time, challenge them. You need to push them beyond their comfort zone, help them learn new things, help them become better thinkers. You shouldn't simplify your teaching especially for ESL students, and you shouldn't give them simplified materials. That's why I always use authentic materials in my classes. I provide challenging activities for them. To do that, it's important to identify where students' current level is with writing and grammar and help them achieve their potential level of development. There is always room for students to improve – not only improve their writing but also their thinking, their perspective on how they look at an issue, how they analyze it. I believe you need to challenge students to grow as a writer and as a thinker.

Challenging students with high expectations and having them work on assignments that use authentic texts, encourage them to think critically, and help them grow as writers were beliefs underlying Jasmine's writing instruction throughout the course. These beliefs were realized with the first step of a three-project sequence – *Rhetorical Analysis*. The project asked students to analyze the rhetorical effectiveness of an article using the concepts discussed in class and with supporting reasons and textual evidence from the article. She asked students to first situate the article in its rhetorical context, and then make a claim about the article's (in) effectiveness in terms of how it was written, provide reasons in support of their assertion,

and then develop their reasons with specific evidence from the article. The project required students to read the article closely, think about its explicit and implicit messages carefully, break it apart to comment on the writer's choices accurately, and express their understanding in writing clearly. Fulfilling these steps challenged students to analyze another writer's perspective and demonstrate their thinking through writing, both of which were skills that Jasmine valued. The project was supported with lectures, group works, and class discussions on the concepts of rhetorical context and rhetorical appeals, which students needed to know to write their analyses. Jasmine presented the new concepts, illustrated them with examples during her presentation, and had students practice them by analyzing a text in groups first and then sharing their findings with their peers, which led to a class discussion. As she noted of the importance of using authentic materials, she had students read newspaper articles on current issues of the time to write their analysis. That way, she said her students read what others were actually reading and kept updated with what was happening in society, which challenged them to "achieve their potential level of development" as readers, thinkers, and involved members of the society. She also used YouTube videos as another type of authentic material to engage her students and exemplify her points.

In response to the same question, Jasmine also shared her other beliefs about teaching and learning writing:

Writing needs to be taught to students with an awareness of the context, the rhetorical context. What I mean is when they read something, they really need to think about who the writer is, his background, his purpose, what he is trying to accomplish with the text, who the readers are, what he wants the readers to do or to think. They need to pay attention to the writer's motivations. Is he objective or is he biased? What kinds of techniques and strategies did he use in his writing? All these will help them think about what they're reading in more depth so they become critical consumers of what they're reading. This is like solving a plan, a rhetorical plan. All writers have a plan in mind, and they execute that plan in writing. So students need to unpack that plan by reading closely. You know, when you do these, it also affects your writing; it improves your writing because you start paying attention to these in your own writing – hopefully. You try to mimic and use these as examples for your own writing. This is important for ESL students because that's how they can improve their writing and their thinking. That's how they can learn how to write like a native speaker and think like them. They will meet readers' expectations better that way so they won't be confused when they read what the ESL student writes.

The insights Jasmine shared in this response as well as the previous response point to her alignment with the current-traditional perspective,

specifically the contrastive rhetoric practice, and the process approach. The second project in the three-project sequence that she used in class is an example that illustrates her implementation of these approaches. *Research-Based Argumentative Essay* was the second project, which focused on developing a researched classical argument. Jasmine asked students to select a controversial social issue, which involved differing viewpoints, research it comprehensively by reading about all sides of the issue, and take a stance on the issue by formulating a clear claim or thesis, and support it with reasons and evidence. Students were introduced to the concept of audience with the first project, and it was revisited and emphasized with the second project again. Supporting her belief that writing needs to be taught within context, she stated that writing didn't exist in isolation and that every time you wrote, you wrote with purpose and for someone. That's why she had students pick a specific audience to target their argument and practice through exercises what addressing audience's beliefs, values, and interests means and how they can come up with supporting reasons for their claim that are specifically rooted in their audience's beliefs and with convincing evidence for their reasons that will persuade their intended audience the most.

Researching the issue thoroughly and reading about the disagreements underlying different perspectives required students to consider the opposing views besides their own. To acknowledge the counter-arguments accurately

and in a fair manner, Jasmine had students take on the role of a skeptical audience and approach their peers' arguments from that angle so that they would challenge each other by raising questions, concerns, and by brainstorming all possible objections. Students needed to also respond to these counter-arguments in their essays. Successful completion of all these steps relied on students' ability to analyze the issues and think about them critically, which Jasmine valued. Additionally, in reference to her practice of the current-traditional rhetoric, specifically contrastive rhetoric, she had students develop their essays using a specific organizational pattern including such sections as introduction which provides necessary background, grabs readers' attention, and states writer's thesis, development of writer's reasons and supporting evidence, rebuttal section in which objections are addressed, and conclusion. Jasmine stated that this organizational pattern, which followed the guidelines of the classical argument, was a commonly used arrangement in argumentative essays, and it followed an academic form that readers were familiar with and would expect as they were reading student essays. She also mentioned that this type of classical development of an argument could be expanded into much longer research papers that students may be asked to write in their other classes. To help students understand this prescribed pattern and practice it in their own essays, she had students examine example texts that were organized and developed based on this pattern. Reading and analyzing a model text and then applying

the structural knowledge gained to their own original piece are the main tenets of the current-traditional approach, specifically the contrastive rhetoric perspective, which were a part of Jasmine's classroom practices.

When Jasmine shared her beliefs about teaching and learning writing, she also made references to the features of the process approach. Not only her response but also her design of the course demonstrated her alignment with this instructional approach. Seeing the act of writing as solving a rhetorical problem and executing a rhetorical plan, she emphasized students' mental process or cognitive thinking and the process through which they go to create text. In this viewpoint, the rhetorical problem to be solved includes the rhetorical situation, the audience, and the writer's goals. To solve the rhetorical problem and write effectively, students need to plan extensively, and their mental processes need to be in concert with their audience, language, and reality. Once students identify the rhetorical problem and plan their essay to meet their rhetorical goals, they continue the writing process. This process includes students' translating their plans and thoughts into writing and reviewing their work through revising and editing. These applications were present in Jasmine's instruction. As part of this writing process, she also provided other opportunities that were in line with the process approach; for example, freewrites, journals, self-discovery exercises, reflections, heuristics for self-exploration, multiple drafts, and writing workshops.

To capture Jasmine's instructional beliefs thoroughly, including the ones that perhaps she had but did not execute in practice or the ones that did not reveal themselves in class, she reflected on a question that specifically inquired about this:

There are some things I want to do more of in my writing classes, but for the most part, I do what is important to me that really show who I am as a teacher and what I want my students to achieve. I'm aware of what kind of teacher I am, what I value in my teaching, and how I need to convey those values to students so that they can learn, improve, and become better writers and thinkers. So, yes, what I do in class, my exercises, workshops, group works, class discussions, projects, I think about why I want my students to do them, and the answer is because that's what I believe to be true for good writing instruction, that's what's beneficial for students. But like I said, there are some things that I value about writing, but I don't get to do them much in class because there isn't much time or I need creative ideas about how to integrate them into my class. I think I would say collaboration between students and writing in different contexts, for example professional writing or major-specific writing.

As a practitioner of the process approach, during the writing process, Jasmine had students work on invention activities that called for collaboration among students. These were in the form of in-class pair and

group works, peer review sessions, and group writing conferences. She also gave students the option of completing the third and last *Visual Argument* project in pairs or small groups. Allowing such an option to students, along with her use of a variety of collaborative tasks, shows the value she places on collaboration, and this was apparent in my observations of her class. Even though she stated that she wanted to find creative ways to integrate more collaborative assignments into her teaching, it was apparent in her design and delivery that the collaboration component of the class was not overlooked. Jasmine had more to say about her second point about “writing in different contexts, for example professional writing or major-specific writing.”

I want to get background information about students’ majors, for example, what are the expectations of different majors, what kind of writing do they require their students to do, how are they expected to think, what kinds of skills so they expect their students to have? I want to know more about this so I can help students integrate into the academia better.

In this response, Jasmine uses some key words that reveal that besides her beliefs and instructional practices that fall within the current-traditional and process approaches, she also subscribes to the ideals of the social constructionist or English for academic purposes view. Although her beliefs about using authentic texts, challenging students to think, analyze, and approach what they read and write critically are also valued in the social



constructionist view, there were not specific writing tasks and activities that would illustrate a clear application of the social-constructionist view.

Similarly, although the rhetorical analysis and research-based argumentative essay projects she assigned teach the necessary academic writing and research skills that are also supported by the social constructionist view, there were not specific assignments that would demonstrate that she designed the course with an emphasis on the social-constructionist view. This observation becomes more apparent when comparing Jasmine's class with Vivienne's class, which included writing assignments, for example the disciplinary interview assignment, that were designed with the purpose of applying the social constructionist view. However, as Jasmine notes, although she strives to "help students integrate into the academia better," that belief was not executed often in concrete ways in her class that I observed.

#### Research Question: Factors Influencing Course Design and Delivery

To determine the factors that might influence Jasmine's course design and delivery, when asked about the key features of her course and why she does them, she explained:

I think one of the main features that will stand out in my writing classes and that's how I design my classes is I have a consistent pattern, which is the consistent process I take my students through and that's how I design the process work for each writing project. You

know, you've seen it in my classes; it's the steps I have students go through from the beginning of the project, with all the pre-writing, invention activities, to the final draft. I think I do similar things with others. I've observed others' classes and looked at their syllabus. I mean, that's what we are expected to do; allow students to go through a writing process and get help along the way on their paper.

Indeed, Jasmine was consistent with how she designed and delivered the projects throughout the course. For each project, she took students through a similar process that aimed to help them learn the necessary concepts and skills related to the project being covered and complete certain steps so that they could produce and submit quality work at the end. That process consisted of this sequence: Introduction of the new subject/project (i.e., rhetorical analysis, researched argumentation, and visual argument) through a teacher presentation of the concepts related to the project (e.g., rhetorical situation, rhetorical triangle and appeals, classical argument, persuasion through images); a relevant free-write that was meant to have students start thinking about what was to come in the project, which led to a class discussion; a series of pre-writing tasks in the form of pair and group invention activities, followed by class discussions, which were meant to help students practice concepts that they either used in their projects directly or that they needed to understand in order to craft their work; and examination of articles and projects written by scholars and previous students that served

as examples for students to consider as they developed and organized their own work. The learning process for each project also consisted of a drafting stage in which students workshoped their rough drafts in groups. This was followed by class periods devoted to instruction and practice of grammar and conventions so that students would revise their work further after receiving content-related feedback from their peers. That is, the initial drafting session focused on the development and organization of ideas, sentences, and paragraphs. Once those concerns have been addressed, and students have improved the content of their work, later revisions focused on surface issues, such as grammar, mechanics, and citations.

Another key feature that Jasmine explained that defined her course was the element of reflective writing:

I mentioned that I embrace the Vygotskian approach and I said I wanted to do more collaboration between students. Collaboration and supporting students' learning that way is part of the Vygotskian approach. But there is also metacognition, which is also part of the same approach. Encouraging students to be aware of their strengths and weaknesses as a writer and telling them to think about how they think and write – that's important to me. I think this kind of in-depth thinking helps students reflect on what they're learning in class and what they can do to improve.

The concept of metacognition was incorporated throughout Jasmine's course; it was the last step of the writing process she designed for the projects. At the end of each project, she had students reflect on their learning using the Writing Program Administrators (WPA) Outcomes, which first-year composition courses are expected to adhere to (see Appendix). The WPA Outcomes have five categories: Rhetorical Knowledge, Critical Thinking Reading and Writing, Processes, Knowledge of Conventions, Composing in Electronic Environments. Each category has also sub-objectives. After completion of each project, she asked students to select two objectives from each category and reflect on how they achieved those objectives by providing a variety of concrete examples from course content as evidence. They were to use the following items as sources of evidence to support their reflection: Excerpts from chapters in the textbook, excerpts from rough and final drafts of projects, examples from invention work they completed in class and the textbook, notes they have written about the chapters, comments from her, their peers, and the writing center, and relevant external sources that they have read on the Web. After evaluating their learning specific to the process of each project, they were to also reflect on what areas they identified about themselves that they needed to improve upon.

One other key feature that Jasmine discussed was the inclusion of research and documentation into her course design:

I would also say research is another important feature of my courses, especially like this one where we talk about how to make a good argument, and you need examples, evidence to support an argument. So, when you create a course like this, you need to teach research. I mean, ESL students need to know how to do simple research, when to use evidence in their paper, where to find credible sources, and how to use the library. So, I make sure I give enough class time to teach these because these skills will transfer to their other courses. They will be asked to do research, write research papers, so at least they will be familiar with those skills in this class.

In light of Jasmine's previous response on her desire to "integrate students into the academia better," along with her point here about teaching research skills that students can use in other courses, she planned classes on the demonstration and discussion of evaluating sources for their credibility, using the college library databases, documenting sources effectively through summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting, and citing sources correctly. Additionally, the second project she assigned had an annotated bibliography portion that required students to find sources both for and against their argument, justify their selection of those particular sources by explaining their relevance to their argument, and cite them. She had hands-on sessions in which she demonstrated these topics in class online and students practiced

them with assistance from her and their peers through relevant invention activities.

Besides her beliefs that shaped her writing instruction, Jasmine also designed her course with adherence to the institution's expectations for ENG 108. She stated:

I follow the goals and guidelines set by the college to achieve academic success. Certain topics and skills need to be taught in ENG 107 and ENG 108. There needs to be a difference between both courses so teachers and students can see how ENG 108 adds to the skills in ENG 107. The focus of each course is a little different, and this is already published by the college. That brings some standard to all those composition courses, and I follow those standards when I prepare my course.

As Jasmine explained, the community college she taught at has pre-established competencies which teachers are expected to refer to as they design the curriculum for their first-year composition courses (see Appendix). As mentioned in the course description, the emphasis in ENG 108 is on rhetoric and composition with a focus on persuasive, research-based writing, and understanding writing as a process. Jasmine's course was in line with the course description. Looking at the more specific competencies (i.e., applying knowledge of rhetorical contexts, refining effective writing processes, researching critically, writing persuasively, and applying

conventions, and it was clear that they certainly factored into Jasmine's instructional decisions, as they corresponded directly with how Jasmine designed and delivered her course. As a part of the standard guidelines that Jasmine mentioned, the department also requires teachers to select a textbook for the course from a pre-determined list. Jasmine said she had decided to use *Writing Arguments* by John Ramage from the list because of the book's coverage of various argument types – written and visual – that provided opportunities for students to learn about that they might not have known before and use them as examples for their own projects. She also said she used the same book in ENG 102 and did the same things in both courses, so she did not want to simplify ENG 108 for students even with her textbook choice.

Research Question: Technological Practices Emerging from  
Pedagogical Beliefs and Decisions

Listening to Jasmine's reflections of her beliefs about writing pedagogy and observing her course, it was apparent that she approached teaching writing with knowledge and experience. She cared about providing the best instruction for her students that aimed to challenge them and help them improve. She designed class activities, workshops, and projects, which she justified with pedagogically sound reasoning. Her investment in and enthusiasm for delivering quality-writing instruction had similar impact on her use of computer technology as an integral part of the course. She noted:

Students are already fascinated with technology, but some of them get frustrated because they say, “Why do I need to use this?” but if they see the teacher’s enthusiasm, if the teacher uses technology in a meaningful way, and if students see that using technology is useful, then they go along with it. If they like what they’re doing, they will embrace it and definitely take the extra time to learn how to use it. I get students excited about technology. I know what they need, which tools will be helpful for them. I use technology in a way that supports my teaching and students’ learning of the subject matter, which is about writing, argument, and research.

There was always a meaningful connection between what Jasmine wanted to teach in terms of writing or research skills and the technologies she used. She either used them herself as part of her presentations to demonstrate to students how they worked, for example PowerPoint and Prezi so that they could also use, or she used them to accommodate students’ different learning styles and as a means to provide feedback. Most students were familiar with PowerPoint, but they had not seen Prezi, so Jasmine’s use of these presentation tools provided a visual aid both for the concepts she was explaining during her presentations and an example for students to experiment with. For the last project of the three-project sequence, which was a *Visual Argument*, she had students create and present their argument, which was in the form of a public affairs advocacy ad or a public service



announcement, using one of these software programs. When Jasmine was teaching about how to write an effective rhetorical analysis and a researched argumentative essay, she had students study examples to model after. Similarly, her use of technology, as in the case of the presentation programs, was also to support her teaching, as she pointed out.

In terms of accommodating students' different learning styles and in light of her use of the process approach, she had students collaborate and workshop on the various steps of the writing process to complete the invention and drafting assignments on the computers. For example, students brainstormed and provided feedback for each other's topics on the discussion boards that she created within the online course site, which she said allowed for greater class participation and detailed feedback on the topics. Another example online discussion activity was when students challenged each other's arguments by taking on the role a skeptical audience and provided counter-arguments so that they could refer back to same forum later to consider these ideas when they were writing their projects. Students also uploaded their rough drafts to the course site and completed the peer reviews electronically. This was in addition to in-class group discussions of the rough drafts to give multiple opportunities to students to analyze their papers with their peers and get the most feedback to improve their final drafts. Jasmine also provided feedback on student work in the form of written and audio comments depending on students' preference. The online course site already

had an audio comment feature built into it, and she took advantage of it. She also experimented with other commercial Web sites (Camtasia Relay and Screencast-o-matic) outside of the college system. To support her teaching and assist students, she showed them how they could meet with her over Google Hangouts or Skype as an alternative to face-to-face office hours. Computer technology was a noticeable component of Jasmine's instruction, and using it helped her demonstrate to students how it could be useful in meaningful ways to support their learning, accommodate their different learning styles, and provide them with feedback in different ways. It also helped to support her instruction and beliefs about what students need to learn and how they can improve during the writing process.

Jasmine shared that although she had her own ideas about which technology to use to support her teaching and students' learning, and how to use it in class in a meaningful way, she thought she might be able to use technology in more innovative ways if her institution offered training opportunities on specifically how to incorporate technology into writing classes:

I'm really interested in how computer technology can be more compatible with writing classes. I feel I've already immersed myself in the theory and practice of writing and technology, but computer-assisted learning is a fast-changing field, so I always want to be ahead of the curve. I take advantage of what the college offers, but

sometimes I'm not satisfied with their training. It can be more specific for writing classes; they can offer more innovative ideas. I mean, for example, I'm now interested in Second Life, gaming theory, Google Sites, and how they can support my teaching, so I usually go outside of college to learn about these.

Indeed, Jasmine's application of her beliefs about teaching writing and the emergent technological practices in support of these beliefs attest to her efforts for being ahead of the curve. Her desire for innovation is also a result of her positive attitude toward the place of computers in the writing classroom, which she expressed as follows:

Whatever you believe about writing and teaching; whatever you do in class about writing, you need to have an open mind about technology, because it is here to stay. Most of the writing that students do takes place on computers nowadays. If I don't integrate them, students will have difficulty in other courses. So, if a classroom doesn't have computers, I have to find a way to integrate them. I love computers. I feel very comfortable using them. I'm not skeptical or complain about using them. I basically cannot think of teaching writing without them; they complement my teaching well.

The extensive data and analysis provided here is followed in the next chapter by a discussion of the key points in this analysis, limitations of the study, and recommendations for future studies.

## Chapter 5

### CONCLUSION

This chapter presents a summary of the analysis of data by drawing connections between the research contexts, discusses limitations of the study by addressing issues concerning replicability and generalizability germane to the case studies, and makes recommendations for future research by exploring possibilities that expand on this study.

#### Summary of analysis of data

Providing a summary of the analysis of data presented in Chapter 4 is helpful in highlighting the revelations from the analysis of the research contexts based on the research questions. It is also helpful in drawing connections between the research contexts. Regarding the first research question about teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning writing, the three participant teachers had seemingly varying beliefs that were all reflective of the current-traditional, process, and socio-constructionist approaches. Vivienne's beliefs were expressed by student-centered learning with teacher as facilitator and students as active participants in which students discovered knowledge and learned from each other. She also determined group and whole class discussions, teacher-centered learning through lectures, multiple drafts, reformulating ideas through peer review workshops with an emphasis of content taking precedence over form. Her instructional practices were also supported in her beliefs about learning the

academic discourse of students' disciplines and practicing writing tasks suitable for academic purposes. Eric's teaching beliefs were based on good writing and good thinking, and the idea that writing makes students successful later in life. His course design included such decisions as having students use a detailed outline as a form within which to work to extrapolate into an essay, unlimited rewrites, multiple review sessions, and more inclusion of group works and grammar. His beliefs were expressed by empowering students, giving them knowledge to survive in the university, and thinking about the benefit of the work and what good it will do for the students. Jasmine's beliefs focused on challenging students with high expectations, using authentic texts, thinking critically, and helping students grow as writers. They also emphasized that writing needs to be taught with an awareness of the rhetorical context and that writing is like solving a rhetorical problem and executing a rhetorical plan. Her course design included such practices as contrastive rhetoric, using a specific organizational pattern for writing, reading and analyzing a model text, and applying the structural knowledge gained to one's own original piece.

Regarding the second research question about factors influencing course design and delivery, Vivienne identified course curriculum, institutional goals, textbook, and personal experiences as an ESL learner and educator. She also discussed writing as process, learning by doing, thinking critically, and research, which provides opportunities to apply the former, as

key features for her course. Eric and Jasmine also identified course competencies, institutional guidelines, and textbook as influencing factors. In terms of key features of his course design and delivery, Eric discussed rewrites, the idea that there is no such thing as good writing but there is only good rewriting, and that good writing comes down to good thinking. He also emphasized making course relevant to students' interests and fields of study with his aim to have students take the skills they have learned from lectures, discussions, and projects, and apply them in the future classes through thinking creatively, researching, or using the appropriate format and outline based on criteria. Jasmine determined having a consistent pattern to her teaching, metacognition or student reflections, and the elements of research and documentation as key features of her course design and delivery.

For the third research question that investigated emergent technological practices in light of pedagogical beliefs and decisions, Vivienne explained that her use of computer technology was a reflection of her instructional beliefs in that her approach to student-centered learning and writing as a process was supported with relevant computer applications. She expressed a need for education and her intentions for learning more about different methods to use technology to help her deliver course materials. She shared key questions that guided her approach to using technology in class: What is the best way to teach a particular course topic? What do I want to teach and which technology should I use? Will it help? Eric also had a

similar view in the sense that he determined that he would use computer technology in ways that enhance his instructional beliefs and help his teaching and learning ideas - not if it intrudes or compromises his teaching. He defined himself as traditional and used computer technology minimally in class due to his negative past experiences with computers being distractions and overall skepticism about the place of computers within his pedagogical beliefs. However, he expressed a need for more education to learn about how his teaching ideas and classroom practices can be supported by technology. Like Eric and Vivienne, Jasmine also mentioned integrating computer technology in a way to support her teaching and students' learning. She emphasized using computers in a meaningful way to present, provide feedback, accommodate different learning styles, and engage in online discussions. Their use was a noticeable component of Jasmine's course. In direct opposition to Eric, Jasmine shared enthusiasm for using computer-assisted learning and making it an integral part of her course. She said she loved computers, was not skeptical of their place in the writing class, and felt comfortable using them. She thought they complemented her teaching well. Similar to Vivienne and Eric, Jasmine also discussed a need for training opportunities specific to writing classes that offer innovative ideas on how to incorporate technology.

### Limitations

A couple of limitations generally leveled at qualitative studies are also present in this study: replicability and generalizability. Replicability refers to the extent to which a study can be reproduced and results similar to those obtained in the study can be obtained again. There are a few reasons that may make it difficult for others to replicate this study and obtain similar results. For one, given the naturalistic setting of the research contexts, it may be hard to find exactly parallel contexts that resemble the uniqueness of the social situation and conditions of the schools and classroom settings in this study. A related reason is the difficulty of finding parallel participant teachers with similar academic, professional, and cultural backgrounds, teaching experiences, and instructional beliefs. Another reason is the possibility of not reconstructing the research design with parallel methodology. Although this study provides details and explicitness about the data and analysis, the above-mentioned factors may cause difficulties for others to replicate it.

The other limitation of this study is its generalizability, which refers to the issue of generalizing the research results beyond the participants under investigation to a wider population. The reasons related to replicability stated above also apply for this particular limitation. Additionally, the outcomes of this study reflect the particularities and unique conditions of only the three research sites investigated, which raise the issue with their



applicability to other sites. Although it is not my intention to generalize the results beyond the contexts in which the data were collected, the study nonetheless presents this shortcoming. However, this study would be valid in terms of comparability and transferability with other like research contexts.

#### Recommendations for future studies

Despite the limitations, this study contributes to the literature with valuable insights, and it opens doors for other research possibilities that would be worthwhile to explore. For example, one possibility is to conduct a similar study as quantitative research to see what kinds of findings it would reveal. The research can especially explore a larger sample of participants' attitudes toward using computer technology in a writing course and how it affects their classroom practices. The comparative results of quantitative and qualitative studies is always an interesting one, so it would be valuable to find out what quantifiable number of teachers feel positively or negatively about the use of computer technology in a writing class, how these teachers describe their technological practices in class, and what kinds of correlations can be built between these two constructs. In a technologically ridden society, there may be an assumption that all educators embrace technology with open arms and make efforts to incorporate them into their classes, but it would be interesting to verify if those assumptions hold any truth to them. In fact, there are studies that have investigated students' behavioral and cognitive-affective response to the use of computers, and the same idea can be extended

to another population – teachers – to see if and how that response affects their instructional practices.

Another possibility for a future study might be one that investigates the technology training opportunities that English departments offer that are specific to the composition field and especially ones that are tailored to meet the curriculum expectations of the first-year composition courses. Some English departments have a division or designated professionals in charge of providing support for teachers in the form of general technical assistance or presentations/workshops. There are also some other English departments that don't house that type of support within the department but work with a center that provides instructional support for the entire school. These are certainly helpful opportunities that teachers can benefit from, but as expressed by the three participant teachers in this study, oftentimes, teachers look for specific ideas or applications relevant to the writing courses that they teach rather than a general demonstration of a program or an application that doesn't really relate in practical ways to what they do in class. They want to learn about which specific tools, programs, or applications they can use in their writing class, how they can use them, and how they would work with the curriculum of the course. Being presented with lots of technical tools without really knowing how they would fit into a writing course may overwhelm some teachers, and so they may not be willing to invest in the time and effort to integrate them into their course. Therefore,

a study that looks into what kinds of technology-related education opportunities English departments offer and how these support the curricula of the first-year composition courses might be valuable.

## REFERENCES

- Arapoff, N. (1968). Controlled rhetoric frames. *English Language Teaching*, 23, pp. 297-304.
- (1969). Discover and transform: A method of teaching writing to foreign students. *TESOL Quarterly*, 3, pp. 297-304.
- Bartlett, L., Kemmis, S., & Gillard, G. (1982). *Perspectives on case study*. Geelong, Australia: Deakin University Press.
- Bartolomae, D. (1985). Inventing the university. In M. Rose (Ed.), *When a Writer Can't Write: Studies in Writer's Block and Other Composing Process Problems* (pp. 134-165). New York and London: Guilford Press.
- Bartlett, L. (1990). Teacher development through reflective teaching. In J. Richards & D. Nunan (Eds.), *Second Language Teacher Education* (pp. 202-214). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Berlin, J. A. (1982). Contemporary composition: The major pedagogical theories. *College English*, 44, pp. 765-777.
- (1987). *Rhetoric and reality: Writing instruction in American colleges, 1900-1985*. Carbondale and Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.
- (1988). Rhetoric and ideology in the writing class. *College English*, 50, 477-494.
- Bizzell, P. (1987). Language and literacy. In T. Enos (Ed.), *A sourcebook for basic writing teachers* (pp. 125-137). New York: Random House.
- Bogdan, R.C., & Biklen, S. K. (1998). *Qualitative research in education: An introduction to theory and methods* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Breire, E. (1966). Quantity before quality in second language composition. *Language Learning*, 16, pp. 141-151.
- Bruffee, K. A. (1986). Social construction: Language and the authority of knowledge: A bibliographic essay. *College English*, 48, pp. 773-790.
- Cohen, L., & Manion, L. (1985). *Research methods in education*. London: Croom Helm.

- Connor, U., & Johns, A. (1989). Argumentation in academic discourse communities: There are differences. Paper presented at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual TESOL Convention, San Antonio, Texas, March.
- Connor, U. (1996). *Contrastive rhetoric: Cross-cultural aspects of second-language writing*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Denny, T. (1978). Story-telling and educational understanding. No. 12, Occasional Paper Series, College of Education, Western Michigan University. Reprinted in L. Bartlett, S. Kemmis, & G. Gillard (Eds.), *Perspectives in Case Study*, Geelong, Australia: Deakin University Press.
- Ede, L., & Lunsford, A. (1984). Audience addressed, audience invoked: The role of audience in composition theory and pedagogy. *College Composition and Communication*, 35, pp. 155-171.
- Elbow, P. (1973). *Writing without teachers*. New York Oxford University Press.
- (1981). *Writing with power: Techniques for mastering the writing process*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, R. (1990). Researching classroom language learning. In C. Brumfit and R. Mitchell (Eds.), *Research in the language classroom*. London: Modern English Publications.
- Faigley, L. (1985). Non-academic writing: The social perspective. In L. Odell and D. Goswami (Eds.), *Writing in Non-Academic Settings* (pp. 231-248). New York and London: Guilford Press.
- (1986). Competing theories of process: A critique and a proposal. *College English*, 41, pp. 527-547.
- Flower, L. (1979). Writer-based prose: A cognitive basis for problems in writing. *College English*, 41, pp. 19-38.
- (1985). *Problem-solving strategies for writing* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Flower, L., & Hayes, J. R. (1981). A cognitive process theory of writing. *College Composition and Communication*, 32, 4, pp. 365-387.

- Fotos, S., & Browne C. M. (Eds.). (2004). *New perspectives on CALL for second language classrooms*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Fries, C. (1945). *Teaching and learning as a second language*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Gee, J. P. (1989). Literacy, discourse, and linguistics: Introduction and what is literacy? *Journal of Education*, 171, 1, pp. 5-25.
- Horowitz, D. (1986a). Process not product: Less than meets the eye. *TESOL Quarterly*, 20, pp. 141-144.
- (1986b). What professors actually require: Academic tasks for the ESL classroom. *TESOL Quarterly*, 20, pp. 445-462.
- (1992). ESL writing assessments: Contradictions and resolutions. In L. Hamp-Lyons (Ed.), *Assessing ESL writing in academic contexts* (pp. 71-85). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Ilyvenkov, E.V. (1977). *Dialectical logic: Essays on its history and theory*. Moscow: Progress.
- Johns, A. (1988). The discourse communities dilemma: Identifying transferable skills for the academic milieu. *English for Specific Purposes*, 7, pp. 55-60.
- (1997). L1 composition theories: Implications for developing theories of L2 composition. In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Second language writing: Research insights for the classroom* (pp. 24-36). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Johnson, M. (2003). *A philosophy of second language acquisition*. New Haven, London: Yale University Press.
- Kaplan, R. (1966). Cultural thought patterns in intercultural education. *Language Learning*, 16, pp. 1-20.
- (1967). Contrastive rhetoric and the teaching of composition. *TESOL Quarterly*, 1, pp. 10-16.
- (1970). Notes toward an applied rhetoric. In E. Lugton (Ed.), *Preparing the EFL teacher: A project for the seventies* (pp. 45-74). Philadelphia: Center for Curriculum Development.

- (1972). *The anatomy of rhetoric: Prolegomena to a functional theory of rhetoric*. Philadelphia: Center for Curriculum Development.
- Kroll, B. (1997). *Second language writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kern, R. (1995). Restructuring classroom interaction with networked computers: Effects on quantity and quality of language production. *Modern Language Journal*, 79, pp. 457-476.
- Kozulin, A. (1990). *Vygotsky's psychology: A biography of ideas*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Leont'ev, A.N. (1981a). The problem of activity in psychology. *Soviet Psychology*, 21, pp. 55-91.
- Leont'ev, A.N. (1981b). *Problems of the development of mind*. Moscow: Progress.
- Lantolf, J.P., & Appel, G. (1994). Theoretical framework: An introduction to Vygotskian approaches to second language research. In James P. Lantolf & G. Appel (Eds.), *Vygotskian approaches to second language research* (pp. 1-32). Westport, CT: Ablex Publishing.
- Lantolf, J.P. (2000). Introducing sociocultural theory. In J. P. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural theory and second language learning* (pp. 1-26). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lantolf, J.P. (2002). Sociocultural theory and second language acquisition. In R. B. Kaplan (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of applied linguistics* (pp. 104-114). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lomov, B. F. (1982). The problem of activity in psychology. *Soviet Psychology*, 21, pp. 55-91.
- McMillan, J. H. (2000). *Educational research: Fundamentals for the consumer*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York: Longman.
- Miller, J., and Judy, S. (1978). *Writing and reality*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Nunan, D. (1986). *Research methods in language learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nystrand, M., Greene, S., & Wiemelt, J. (1993). Where did composition studies

- come from?: An intellectual history. *Written Communication*, 10(3), 267-333.
- Pennington, M. C. (2003). The impact of the computer in second-language writing. In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Exploring the dynamics of second language writing* (pp. 283-310). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP.
- Raimes, A. (1983). Anguish as a second language? Remedies for composition teachers. In A. Freedman, I. Pringle, and J. Yalden (Eds.), *Learning to write: First language/second language* (pp. 258-272). London: Longman.
- (1983). *Techniques in teaching writing*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- (1991). Out of the woods: Emerging traditions in the teaching of writing. *TESOL Quarterly*, 25(3), 407-430.
- Reid, J. M. (1993). *Teaching ESL writing*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc.
- Richards, J. (1990a). *The language teaching matrix*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J. (1990b). What happened to methods? *The Language Teacher*, 15(6), 9-10.
- Richards, J.C., Platt, J., & Platt, H. (1992). *Longman dictionary of language teaching & applied linguistics*. Edinburgh Gates, Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.
- Reichardt, C., & Cook, T. (1979). Beyond qualitative and quantitative methods. In T. Cook and C. Reichardt (Eds.), *Qualitative and quantitative methods in evaluation research*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.
- Rivers, W. (1968). *Teaching foreign language skills*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Selfe, C. (1999). *Technology and literacy in the twenty-first century: The importance of paying attention*. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Shaughnessy, M. (1979). *Errors and expectations: A guide for the teacher of basic teaching forum*. New York: Oxford University Press.



- Silva, T. (1990). Second language composition instruction: Developments, issues, and directions in ESL. In B. Kroll (Ed.). *Second language writing: Research insights for the classroom* (pp. 11-23). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Spack, R. (1988). Initiating ESL students into the academic discourse community: How far should we go? *TESOL Quarterly*, 22, pp. 29-52.
- Spirkin, A. (1983). Dialectical materialism. In James P. Lantolf & G. Appel (Eds.), *Vygotskian approaches to second language research* (pp. 1-32). Westport, CT: Ablex Publishing.
- Stake, R. (1988). Case study methods in educational research: Seeking sweet water. In R. M. Jaeger (Ed.), *Complementary Methods for Research in Education*. Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.
- Taylor, B. (1981). Content and written form: A two-way street. *TESOL Quarterly*, 15, pp. 5-13.
- Vygotsky, L.S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Vygotsky, L.S. (1981a). The genesis of higher mental functions. In J.V. Wertsch (Ed.), *The concept of activity in Soviet psychology* (144-188). Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe.
- Vygotsky, L.S. (1981b). The instrumental method in psychology. In J.V. Wertsch (Ed.), *The concept of activity in Soviet psychology* (184-143). Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe.
- Vygotsky, L.S. (1986). *Thought and language*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Warschauer, M. (1996). Computer-assisted language learning. *Multimedia Language Teaching*, pp. 3-20.
- (1998). Online learning in sociocultural context. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 29(1), pp. 68-88.
- (2000). Online learning in second language classrooms: An ethnographic study. In M. Warschauer & R. Kern (Eds.), *Network-based language teaching: Concepts and practice*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

- (2004). Technological change and the future of CALL. *New Perspectives on CALL for Second Language Classrooms*, pp. 15-26.
- Warschauer, M. (2005). Sociocultural perspectives on CALL. In J. Egbert & G. M. Petrie. *CALL Research Perspectives* (pp. 41-51). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Watson-Gegeo, K., & Ulichny, P. (1988). Ethnographic inquiry into second language acquisition and instruction. *University of Hawaii Working Papers in ESL*, 7(2).
- Wertsch, J.V. (1985). *Vygotsky and the social formation of mind*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- (1990). The voice of rationality in a sociocultural approach to mind. In L. C. Moll (Ed.), *Vygotsky and education: Instructional implications and applications of sociohistorical psychology* (pp. 111-126). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- (1991). *Voices of the mind. A sociocultural approach to mediated action*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- (1998). *Mind as action*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Wertsch, J.V., Del Río, P., & Alvarez, A. (1995). Sociocultural studies: History, action and mediation. In J. V. Wertsch, P. Del Río, & A. Alvarez (Eds.), *Sociocultural studies of mind* (pp. 1-34). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Wilson, S. (1982). The use of qualitative techniques in educational research. *Review of Educational Research*, 47(1), pp. 245-265.
- Wolcott, H. (1988). A case study using an ethnographic approach. In R. M. Jaeger (Ed.), *Complementary methods for research in education*. Washington, D.C.: American Educational Research Association.
- Young, R. (1978). Paradigms and problems: Needed research in rhetorical invention. In C. Cooper and L. Odell (Eds.), *Research on composing: Points of view* (pp. 29-47). Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Zamel, V. (1983). The composing process of advanced ESL students: Six case studies. *TESOL Quarterly*, 17, pp. 165-187.

Zebroski, J. T. (1986). The uses of theory: A Vygotskian approach to composition. *The Writing Instructor*, 5, 56-57.

Zinchenko, V.P. (1995). Cultural-historical psychology and the psychological theory of activity: Retrospect and prospect. In J. V. Wertsch, P. Del Río, & A. Alvarez (Eds.), *Sociocultural studies of mind* (pp. 37-55). New York: Cambridge University Press.

APPENDIX A

COURSE DESCRIPTION FOR ENG 108

ENG 108 at Desert University  
Course Description and Rationale (from the syllabus)

ENG 108 is designed to give nonnative speakers of English a comprehensive introduction to argument and research. The purpose is to develop effective skills in independent inquiry into various topics as well as expand critical thinking abilities. This course aims to teach you how to write persuasively and to understand the demands made on you by the arguments you encounter. Argumentation involves articulating a claim, using definitions consistently, supporting the claim with a variety of evidence, and drawing conclusions. Shaping an argument means assessing not only "factual" evidence, but also the values, emotions and needs that affect the reasoning process. You will learn how to construct and present a persuasive character for themselves. In addition, you will also learn the necessity of developing the understanding of the relationship between evidence and conclusions.

This course emphasizes that research is not merely mechanical or abstract: it contributes to the goals of the entire course. That is, rather than emphasizing the mere ability to find evidence to support a given argument, the course emphasizes the ability to judge the merit and appropriateness of that evidence, to weigh different pieces of evidence against one another and to engage in intellectual dialogue with the authorities represented by that evidence.

This semester we will focus on argumentative writing strategies—identifying types of arguments, making clear claims, and producing logically organized appeals, using secondary sources to support your points, and documenting your sources. Each of you will have a chance to work on self-selected issues and problems (pending approval by the instructor) that interest and motivate you. The class will be run as a writing and research collective in which each of you will be expected to take responsibility for the direction of your inquiry and ultimately for producing a final project of your own design. Also, this class emphasizes the process of writing so that you will be involved in various invention activities such as brainstorming, freewriting, drafting, and revising. In-class work includes peer review, group discussions, presentations, and writing. Homework includes reading and summarizing the readings, and doing exercises related to the topics covered during the semester.

This course is informed by the mission of the Writing Programs. This mission is to introduce you to the importance of writing in the work of the university and to develop your critical reading, thinking and writing skills so that you can successfully participate in that work. Writing is intellectual work, and the demands of writing within the university community include the need to:

- synthesize and analyze multiple points of view;
- articulate and support one's own position regarding various issues; and
- adjust writing to multiple audiences, purposes and conventions.

As a student in our writing course, you are expected to engage the ideas encountered in academic and serious public discourse, to develop complex ideas and arguments through serious consideration of different perspectives, and to connect your life experiences with ideas and information you encounter in classes.

## APPENDIX B

### COURSE DESCRIPTIONS FOR ENG 102 AND ENG 108

## Course Descriptions at Desert University

### ENG 102

English 102 is designed to help students develop sophisticated, situation-sensitive reading and writing strategies. Students make arguments in formal and informal settings. Special attention is given to evidence discovery, claim support, argument response, and their applications to academic debate, public decision making, and written argument. During the 16-week semester students will complete three formal written projects. Combined the final drafts of these three projects should result in approximately 5,000 words (this is equivalent to about 20 pages using standard academic format). Additionally, a final reflection is required.

### ENG 108

English 108 is second-semester composition course for students for whom English is a second language. It is designed to help students develop sophisticated, situation-sensitive reading and writing strategies. Students make arguments in formal and informal settings. Special attention is given to evidence discovery, claim support, argument response, and their applications to academic debate, public decision making, and written argument. During the 16-week semester students will complete three formal written projects. Combined the final drafts of these three projects should result in approximately 5,000 words (this is equivalent to about 20 pages using standard academic format). Additionally, a final reflection is required. English 108 credits are equivalent of English 102 credits.



APPENDIX C

COURSE COMPETENCIES FOR ENG 107

## Course Description

### ENG 107 First-Year Composition for ESL

Equivalent of ENG101 for students of English as a Second Language (ESL). Standard American English writing skills and emphasis on expository composition. Prerequisites: Appropriate ESL or ASSET placement test score, or a grade of "C" or better in ESL040, or (ESL040AA, ESL040AB, and ESL040AC), or ESL042, or ENG071 or ESL077.

## Course Competencies

1. Generate essay topics from reading, discussion, and observation. (I)
2. Select a general topic suitable for development in an essay of a specified length and for a specific audience and purpose. (I)
3. Compose a thesis statement suitable for development in an essay. (I)
4. Use a thesis statement and support to create a well-organized plan for an essay. (I)
5. Write an essay introduction which creates interest and states the thesis. (II)
6. Write support paragraphs which develop the thesis statement of an essay; contain topic sentences; display unity, coherence, and completeness; and contain specific information and concrete detail. (II)
7. Write a conclusion which follows logically from the body of the essay. (II)
8. Use diction which sustains a consistent level of formality; demonstrates originality; has appropriate connotations/denotations; and reflects effective, appropriate, and original imagery. (II)
9. In a minimum of five essays select and effectively use appropriate rhetorical patterns for a specific purpose and audience employing any combination of the following: exemplification, comparison/contrast, classification, causal analysis, narration, description, process analysis, definition, and essay response. (I,II,III)
10. Write an essay of argumentation which demonstrates sound logical development. (I,II,III)
11. Revise the draft of an essay to demonstrate attention to audience, purpose, organization, style, mechanics and sentence structure. (III)

## Course Outline

- I. Essay prewriting
  - A. Generating the topic
    - 1. Reading
    - 2. Discussion
    - 3. Observation
  - B. Refining the topic
    - 1. Audience
    - 2. Purpose
    - 3. Scope
  - C. Writing the thesis statement and planning the outline
- II. Essay writing
  - A. Introduction
  - B. Paragraphs
    - 1. Thesis statement of essay
    - 2. Topic sentences
    - 3. Unity, coherence, completeness
    - 4. Information, detail
  - C. Conclusion
  - D. Diction
    - 1. Formality
    - 2. Originality
    - 3. Connotations/denotations
    - 4. Imagery
  - E. Rhetorical patterns and combinations
    - 1. Exemplification
    - 2. Comparison/contrast
    - 3. Classification
    - 4. Causal analysis
    - 5. Narration
    - 6. Description
    - 7. Process analysis
    - 8. Definition
    - 9. Essay response
  - F. Essay of logical argumentation
- III. Essay revising
  - A. Draft
  - B. Guidelines
    - 1. Address a specific audience
    - 2. Consider the writer's role
    - 3. Make purpose clear to reader
    - 4. Develop ideas logically

5. Improve organization, development, unity and coherence
6. Use effective vocabulary
7. Employ consistent tone and style
8. Include an appropriate title
9. Eliminate errors and mechanics
10. Employ effective coordination, subordination and parallel structure in sentences

## APPENDIX D

### COURSE COMPETENCIES FOR ENG 108

## Course Description

### ENG 108 First-Year Composition for ESL

Equivalent of ENG102 for students of English as a Second Language (ESL). Emphasis on rhetoric and composition with a focus on persuasive, research-based writing and understanding writing as a process. Developing advanced college-level writing strategies through three or more writing projects comprising at least 4,000 words in total. Prerequisites: Grade of C, or better, in ENG107.

Course Note: Through three or more writing projects comprising at least 4,000 words in total, the student will demonstrate an understanding of writing as a process per the course competencies. Not open to students who have completed ENG101.

## Course Competencies

### ENG 108 First-Year Composition for ESL

1. Write for specific rhetorical contexts, including circumstance, purpose, topic, audience, and writer, as well as the writing's ethical, political, and cultural implications. (I, IV)
2. Organize writing to support a central idea through unity, coherence, and logical development appropriate to a specific writing context. (II, V)
3. Use appropriate conventions in writing, including consistent voice, tone, diction, grammar, and mechanics. (I, V)
4. Find, evaluate, select, and synthesize both online and print sources that examine a topic from multiple perspectives. (I, III)
5. Integrate sources through summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting from sources to develop and support one's own ideas. (III, IV)
6. Identify, select, and use an appropriate documentation style to maintain academic integrity. (III)
7. Use feedback obtained through peer review, instructor comments, and/or other sources to revise writing. (II)
8. Assess one's own writing strengths and identify strategies for improvement through instructor conference, portfolio review, written evaluation, and/or other methods. (II)
9. Generate, format, and edit writing using appropriate technologies. (II, V)

## Course Outline

### ENG 108 First-Year Composition for ESL

#### I. Applying Knowledge of Rhetorical Contexts

- A. Circumstance
- B. Purpose
- C. Topic
- D. Audience
- E. Writer

#### II. Refining Effective Processes

- A. Invention
- B. Drafting
- C. Feedback
- D. Revision
- E. Presentation

#### III. Researching Critically

- A. Primary and secondary sources
- B. Note taking
- C. Summary and paraphrase
- D. Documentation of sources
- E. Information literacy

#### IV. Writing Persuasively

- A. Logical appeals

B. Ethical appeals

C. Emotional appeals

D. Authority

E. Evidence

## V. Applying Conventions

A. Citation style

B. Format

C. Structure

D. Mechanics



APPENDIX E

TEACHER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

## Teacher Interview Questions

### Part 1

1. What country are you from?
2. What is your native language?
3. What is your education? What are your academic degrees?
4. How long have you been teaching?
5. How long have you been teaching in this school?
6. What is your academic training in ESL writing?
7. How long have you been teaching ESL writing?
8. Where have you taught ESL writing before this course?
9. Are there any professional development activities that you have participated in to enhance your teaching of ESL writing?
10. What beliefs about teaching and learning writing can I see reflected in your classes?
11. What beliefs about teaching and learning writing do you have that I might not see reflected in your classes?
12. In an ESL writing class, what goals do you have for your students by the end of the semester?
13. Are there any specific goals and objectives for ESL writing in this school?
14. What areas would you like to learn more about or improve upon in ESL writing?
15. What is your training in using computer technology in the ESL writing class?
16. Do you use CALL? Why (not)?
17. How long have you been using computer technology in teaching ESL writing?
18. How comfortable do you feel teaching with computer technology in an ESL writing class?
19. What are your goals in using computer technology with your students?
20. How do you use the technology to complement your teaching goals in your writing class?
21. What are your strengths in teaching with computer technology?
22. What area(s) would you like to improve on or learn about teaching with computer technology?

### Part 2

What are the key features of your course/classes? Why do you do these?

## APPENDIX F

### WPA OUTCOMES STATEMENTS FOR FIRST-YEAR COMPOSITION

## WPA Outcomes Statements for First-Year Composition

### Rhetorical Knowledge

By the end of first-year composition, students should:

- Focus on a purpose
- Respond to the needs of different audiences
- Respond appropriately to different kinds of rhetorical situations
- Use conventions of format and structure appropriate to the rhetorical situation
- Adopt appropriate voice, tone, and level of formality
- Understand how genres shape reading and writing
- Write in several genres

### Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing

By the end of first-year composition, students should:

- Use writing and reading for inquiry, learning, thinking, and communicating
- Understand a writing assignment as a series of tasks, including finding, evaluating, analyzing, and synthesizing appropriate primary and secondary sources
- Integrate their own ideas with those of others
- Understand the relationships among language, knowledge, and power

### Processes

By the end of first year composition, students should:

- Be aware that it usually takes multiple drafts to create and complete a successful text
- Develop flexible strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proof-reading
- Understand writing as an open process that permits writers to use later invention and re-thinking to revise their work
- Understand the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes
- Learn to critique their own and others' works
- Learn to balance the advantages of relying on others with the responsibility of doing their part
- Use a variety of technologies to address a range of audiences

## Knowledge of Conventions

By the end of first-year composition, students should:

- Learn common formats for different kinds of texts
- Develop knowledge of genre conventions ranging from structure and paragraphing to tone and mechanics
- Practice appropriate means of documenting their work
- Control such surface features as syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

## Composing in Electronic Environments

As has become clear over the last twenty years, writing in the 21st-century involves the use of digital technologies for several purposes, from drafting to peer reviewing to editing. Therefore, although the *kinds* of composing processes and texts expected from students vary across programs and institutions, there are nonetheless common expectations.

By the end of first-year composition, students should:

- Use electronic environments for drafting, reviewing, revising, editing, and sharing texts
- Locate, evaluate, organize, and use research material collected from electronic sources, including scholarly library databases; other official databases (e.g., federal government databases); and informal electronic networks and internet sources
- Understand and exploit the differences in the rhetorical strategies and in the affordances available for both print and electronic composing processes and texts

## Habits of Mind

By the end of first-year composition, students should demonstrate that they have performed:

- Curiosity – the desire to know more about the world.
- Openness – the willingness to consider new ways of being and thinking in the world.
- Engagement – a sense of investment and involvement in learning.
- Creativity – the ability to use novel approaches for generating, investigating, and representing ideas.
- Persistence – the ability to sustain interest in and attention to short- and long-term projects.

- Responsibility – the ability to take ownership of one's actions and understand the consequences of those actions for oneself and others.
- Flexibility – the ability to adapt to situations, expectations, or demands.
- Metacognition – the ability to reflect on one's own thinking as well as on the individual and cultural processes used to structure knowledge.